Summary, Spring Meeting
Depository Library Council

Washington, DC
May 17-18, 1993

Monday, May 17, 1993

The Spring 1993 Depository Library Council (DLC) meeting was held May 17-18, 1993 in the Carl Hayden Room at the Government Printing Office (GPO). Council members in attendance: Gary Cornwell, Chair; Beth Duston, Chair-Elect; Susan Tulis, Secretary; William Ellis; Carol Gordon; Sandy Morton-Schwalb; Robert Oakley; Kay Schlueter; Jack Sulzer; Richard Varn; Mark Vonderhaar; and John Weiner.

The meeting began with Council setting its goals and objectives for this meeting. It was hoped that by working through the draft document, "Alternatives for Restructuring the Depository Library Program (DLP)," Council could move the discussion forward, come up with some recommendations, and be able to issue the report not as a draft but as a report of Council.

Wayne Kelley, Superintendent of Documents, told us that this meeting was important to GPO because of all the changes taking place throughout the government. GPO staff would be carefully listening to all that is said during this meeting. Library Programs Service (LPS) will be having a retreat in June to talk about what they are doing, their successes, their frustrations, and discuss how they can improve on their performance based upon what they have heard at this meeting and others.

Judy Russell, Director, LPS, updated us on GPO connecting to the Internet. Commerce is in the process of installing an Internet connection for its Electronic Bulletin Board. If it works for Commerce, then GPO will copy them. The plan is to have telnet access through the Internet to the bulletin board, allowing screen capture and supporting kermit file transfer, but no FTP.

In response to a question, Ms. Russell stated that GPO will accept the software for Phase 1 of ACSIS by the conclusion of this fiscal year, after having had one full year of testing, use, and debugging. There is no firm schedule for when phases 2 and 3 will be in place. Phase 1 is already impacting GPO; the classifiers have moved to the receiving area so they can work with the material as it arrives. This change should expedite the processing as well as identify problems, such as shorts, and will provide more timely opportunity to respond to

them. Phase 2 deals with the production of shipping lists; a by-product will be electronic delivery of shipping lists. Testing on Phase 2 should begin Oct. 1, 1993. Phase 3 has to do with microfiche.

The breaking out of item numbers is being done by the inspectors as time permits. There is, therefore, no target date for when the 30 suggested items numbers might be broken out. At this point it is hard to estimate if this will result in any cost savings since LPS will still have to resurvey libraries. Ms. Russell also mentioned another proposal being considered. It appears in the May 15, 1993 Administrative Notes issue and deals with the discontinuation of ephemeral materials such as newsletters, preprints, reprints, and separates. She stressed that this is just a proposal.

Russell Duncan, Graphic Systems Development Division, gave Council a demonstration of a prototype online Congressional Record. The software he demonstrated was Electronic Book Technology by Dynatext. It was fairly sophisticated and supported a Windows application. The company had done some customization for GPO, such as always showing you what page number you were on and who was speaking. Standard Generalized Markup Language (SGML) was needed so that sections within sections within sections could be located. It is possible to limit a search request based on the SGML tags. With a color monitor, the different types of material in the Record appeared in different colors. Mr. Duncan said that it would be possible to have it be different type faces if a color monitor was not used. Tables are in there, but GPO hasn't figured out exactly how they will be put in. It is also possible to cut and paste portions, export portions, and set up different screen views and different printer views. At present, GPO is working to make its typesetting program accept SGML tags.

It is still not clear how this would be distributed to depository libraries. Libraries might dial up to GPO to search, libraries might receive the SGML tagged data so they could put it up on their local systems, or libraries might get a monthly cumulative CD-ROM. It is assumed that one year of the Congressional Record would take 2 disks. It might also be possible to produce a cumulative index of the bi-weekly indexes on a CD-ROM. Ms. Russell said that for a while there will probably be multiple formats, until they find what is best and most cost-effective. The RFP for the software is being worked on right now; so it is not certain the selection of software will be finalized.

Joan Lippincott, Coalition for Networked Information (CNI), spoke about CNI's Access to Public Information Program (APIP) which has the overall purpose of improving public access to networked government information via the Internet. The primary objectives of this program are to push things a little more quickly than they might happen in the formal bureaucratic environment of the institutions that exist and to launch some experimental products and disseminate what they learn. One of the initiatives is to improve GPO Depository Library connectivity to and programming of networked Federal information. Council was very much interested in this particular initiative since it has just been talking about electronic libraries. This may be a way to test out what the issues are in terms of providing service to networked information, how to receive it, how to archive it, how the receiving library can get information out to others, both on Internet and those not on Internet, etc. No libraries have been chosen yet for this project. It was suggested that Carol Gordon and Jack Sulzer work with CNI in whatever way possible and communicate back to both GPO

and Council with their findings or plan.

Carol Watts, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, spoke about the work being done at NOAA to collect and disseminate data on the global change activities of the Federal government. There is a Library Information Subgroup of the Interagency Working Group on Data Management for Global Change. In addition to saving researchers' time and assisting those who need to obtain global change information, this subgroup will coordinate library collections, work with others on bibliographic problems, identify and develop library products, work with libraries and information producers, and address preservation issues.

Steve Hayes outlined the activities of the Dupont Circle Group, an independent group of practicing documents librarians who put together a discussion document on restructuring of the Depository Library Program. All depositories should have received copies by now.

Mike DiMario, Acting Public Printer, briefly touched on a number of topics. (The full text of his remarks appear in Administrative Notes, vol. 14, no. 11, May 31, 1993, pp. 1-2.) While it is true that he is in an acting capacity, GPO is not in a holding pattern. Some changes he proposed are linking the Council meeting with the annual Federal Depository Conference, moving the annual meeting and the Spring Council meeting around the country, that new appointments to Council will come from the ranks of working depository librarians, and changing the plan for the distribution of the Serial Set.

In regard to the Serial Set, Mr. DiMario said that he had received a letter from Senator Ford asking him to reconsider his predecessor's decision about its distribution. Since Congress was willing to move money from Congressional Printing and Binding for the distribution of the Serial Set, Mr. DiMario sees this as the direction Congress intended GPO to take. He also feels that the whole issue of the Serial Set has put the Public Printer and the Superintendent of Documents in an outrageous position of making political decisions. That is not the function of either job. Their jobs are largely ministerial in nature - to carry out the mandates of the policy that have been established by the Congress and the President. But he also acknowledged that there is only so much funding. One method of dealing with the limited funding is that when you run out of money, you go and advise the Congress of that situation. The amount of money given to this program to "inform the nation" is minute.

There was concern by Council members about Mr. DiMario's suggestion that being a working depository librarian might be a prerequisite to being a member of Council. Mr. DiMario stated that it was his sense that other interested parties should be made ex-officio members of Council. They would still participate fully in the deliberations, but not vote. Members of Council felt that a balance needed to be struck in the membership of Council.

Discussion of Council Document

Bob Oakley served as the facilitator for the discussion of the Council draft document. The draft report does not come to any conclusions or recommendations and it was thought that this might result from this discussion.

The first question addressed was "why are we talking about restructuring anyhow?"

Council suggested five possible reasons for restructuring the program. The changing nature of information dissemination, moving from print to electronic is one reason. The second reason is a response to the economic crisis surrounding the program. A third reason is addressing the fact that there is a better way, a better vision for disseminating government information. A paradigm shift to a user driven system is the fourth reason. Lastly, with all the electronic initiatives taking place right now, restructuring may be needed to redefine the depository library's role in the new information environment.

While it might be true that changing formats and a better vision may be uppermost in many people's minds, the economic crisis is still a large factor that can't be dismissed. Observers pointed out that it might be a political crisis or an economic reality as opposed to a economic crisis.

The second question Council addressed was "what are the values/goals of the DLP?" Seven such values/goals were identified and Council felt that it was possible to define a role for depository libraries in each of them.

Values/Goals

1. Informed electorate - government accountability;

2. Economic benefits - building better economic potential or opportunities;

3. Education;

4. Intermediaries - librarians know what information is out there and how to find it. Libraries serve as information utilities.

5. Neutral sites - libraries serve as the boy/girl scouts of the information arena. Libraries don't have an ax to grind, there is no spin put on the information. As Senator Kerrey said, "People trust libraries."

6. Libraries are the heart or focal points of communities and therefore the obvious link to get government information to citizens.

7. Libraries serve as a way of sharing information - between Federal government, state governments, and citizens.

It was mentioned a number of times that the $30 million dollar program to "inform the nation" is such a small amount when you are talking about a trillion dollar government budget. While $30 million sounds like it is not easy to cut, it is easy to cut. One observer pointed out that the current Federal budget proposal includes $261 billion in incentive programs. Is the DLP part of the group that should be involved in an incentive program to have an informed nation or is it part of the group that needs to be sliced out of the budget so that you have the money for the incentive program? There is a need to illustrate to Congress the value of the DLP. In some respects, the DLP is a victim of its own efficiency. The program has made do with the funding it has received. But we have reached the limit of what else can be done with limited funding.

Assumptions

Next, the report itself was discussed. It was decided to change assumption nine to read:

9. New laws, regulations and information systems, and related changes in how government information is collected, maintained, and disseminated will have a major impact on the Depository Library Program.

Assumption one, which reads, "The Depository Library Program is and will continue to be a vital link between the citizens and the agencies of American government needing to distribute information" also generated discussion. It was questioned whether we should say depository libraries or just libraries. Is this assumption too limiting for how we envision the future? Libraries will serve a vital link in the transition, but depository libraries may be a link, not the link. It was also pointed out that the Dupont Circle Group did not make the assumption that the DLP will exist as we now know it. Does Council really mean GPO's DLP or rather a system of active government distribution in a systematic way of its information resources through libraries? Additionally, it was argued that the DLP will continue to be a vital link because not everything is going to be electronic and the archival function of libraries is essential. If Council can agree with the DLP benefits statements (both to the public and to Federal agencies) of the Dupont Circle Group, then assumption one is true. It may not be the DLP as we now know it, but there will be some designated group of libraries to act as intermediaries between the source of government information and the end users. The consensus of Council was that assumption one should be changed to:

1. A Depository Library Program should and will continue to be a vital link between the citizens and the agencies of American government needing to distribute information.

Alternative Scenarios

The alternative scenarios that appear in the report are the result of brainstorming. The plan was to get a number of scenarios out onto the table so that they could be discussed. The tougher job is to see which ones Council likes or dislikes, and possibly make some recommendations for the future direction of the DLP.

The scenarios can be grouped into three clusters: economically oriented, access to electronic, and relationships between different kinds of depositories.

Economically Oriented

Downsizing was the first economically oriented scenario that Council addressed. Downsizing means two different things: reducing the number of libraries in the system and also reducing the number of items selected by libraries.

There was a general feeling among some Council members that many smaller libraries feel that the administrative overhead is killing them and they might be forced to drop out of the Program. Picking up on the Basic Service Centers outlined in the Dupont Circle Report, maybe some libraries would be willing to receive a predetermined core set of items in exchange for different overhead responsibilities (i.e. no inspections, no disposition lists, etc.)

The question was raised as to why libraries don't just select less? Besides the fact that this proposal would reduce the overhead burden, there are mixed signals coming from GPO in terms of how much libraries are supposed to select. The inspectors are telling libraries that they have to select a certain percentage, and others within GPO are telling libraries they need to select less.

Another option mentioned was to allow libraries to select a core collection, with reduced overhead responsibilities, and then shift some of the money saved to purchase equipment needed for accessing electronic information. (Similar to what the Patent and Trademark Office does with its Patent Depository Libraries.)

Another aspect of downsizing is requiring libraries to meet some sort of minimum requirements or standards to be a depository library.   But what exactly is meant when we say minimum requirements or standards? Are we talking about overhead responsibilities, computer workstations, shelving, staffing, or service?   And are we trying to increase or decrease the standards? In some instances we may be trying to decrease the overhead burden so the quality of service can be increased. Equipment requirements might be used to convince a director of the need for such equipment in order to stay in the Program. But lowering the overhead burdens may result in the Program not doing what it was intended to do by Congress.

Reducing the number of libraries in the system raises a whole host of other questions/concerns. The Council report states that one of the strengths of the Program is that depository libraries are in every Congressional district - can we turn around and start pulling libraries out? How do you handle redistricting and grandfathering in, which produces more than two libraries per Congressional district? The law currently doesn't allow for undesignating a depository library. That is why there is a strict inspection program to meet certain standards.

It was suggested that maybe reducing the number of libraries couldn't exist on its own - maybe it needs to be done in conjunction with another scenario. While it is true that reducing the number of libraries in the Program would address the economic concerns, it may not address the other reasons for restructuring.   If there are two or three depository libraries in one district, do they all need to be of the same service level? Can you restructure so you have different criteria for law libraries, Federal libraries, etc.? Or different criteria levels dependent on the number of items selected? Or could you require that all the libraries in one Congressional district can't collectively select more than 125% of all available items (this assumes Regionals are excluded in this formula)?

It was suggested that we might want to recommend a moratorium on appointing new depository libraries. It was not clear whether this was possible to do, legally. But it might work if done in conjunction with minimum technical requirements for a library to become a depository. It was also unclear whether Council was trying to say there should be no more depository libraries or there should be fewer than the current 1400. It was suggested that we study this more and come back to it at the Fall meeting.

The other economically oriented scenario is the direct support model.   This model has as its basis the notion that customer satisfaction or empowerment from the perspective of the

consumer is the best measure of success and the best place to control the system. It relies on knowing how much each library costs the system and how much money is available to support them. Each library then gets to choose how to spend its allocation - either on products and services from GPO or from any other provider. This system won't get GPO any more money, but does enable libraries to feel more ownership in the system.

There were many questions about this model. Can GPO, would GPO give this much control to libraries? The additional administrative aspects to implement this are astronomical. How do you assign value to items - by publications, by item numbers, or what? How do you determine the base budget for each library? How do you know when a library has spent all their money? How do you allow for new publications? What benefits does this system provide to users? Who is going to take the less glitzy stuff and how will librarians know who has what?

There was some discussion of expanding the potential uses of a library's allocated credits to include the purchase of equipment. There was also some interest expressed in enlarging the scope of permissible uses to include training.

This model is mainly designed for when GPO doesn't have enough money. If GPO is covering all the costs and everyone is getting what they need, then this proposal isn't necessary.

Tuesday, May 18, 1993

Access to Electronics

Four of the Council scenarios fit into this cluster:

1) GPO as the primary point of access,
2) electronic depositories,
3) minimum technical requirements, and
4) renaming the program to recognize changes brought on by the era of electronic information.

The first question Council addressed was "what is the role of GPO in providing access to electronic government information?" Is it limited to tangible products and services as is suggested in one of the Dupont Circle Group models? Should GPO concentrate on the print products, the things they do well, and look for another source for depository libraries to receive the electronic information, so they don't have to split resources to get into a whole new ballgame?

There are many who feel that the time for central coordinated distribution has passed. Agencies have information out there on the Internet, and WAIS servers. Should GPO's role in electronics be having a locator or access system? Is it wrong to say that depository libraries are going to be able to fulfill their mission with only online sources from GPO in the future?

Or should GPO act as an intermediary to acquire electronic services for the DLP rather than bring them up themselves, build its own computer system or tie into a supercomputer in the sky? Many believe that GPO should serve a procurement role on behalf of the DLP. One way for GPO to do this is for GPO to become a GOPHER site, gopher into other Federal data sources, or if necessary, telnet out to get into other sources.

Or instead of GPO serving as a central gateway, should you have electronic depositories serving as nodes themselves, serving a more distributed function?

It was unclear whether it is too late for GPO to get involved. Things are changing daily, maybe the best thing is for GPO to stick itself into one of the many initiatives currently available, and get some experience. Just getting on the Internet and experimenting with that would be a good start. Working with CNI on their initiative could get GPO the answer to some of the questions we have been asking in terms of electronic depositories.

Although Council never answered the question as to whether GPO should be in the business of providing access to electronic government information online, the answer is in the GPO Access bill. Assuming it passes, the specific provisions as to what GPO should be doing are outlined in the bill. If GPO doesn't do a good job of fulfilling the requirements of the Access bill, the question is a moot one because GPO won't be involved in it anyway.

The bill requires GPO to provide an electronic directory. What does this mean? Will it be a locator system of everything or a locator to agency locator systems? Is providing a locator to locators something we want the DLP to do? At this point there are no incentives or standards for agencies to provide their information in formats that are usable. How will GPO address that?

What would be lost if users went directly to the agencies as opposed to a GPO gateway? Would there still be low cost or free access to information if the direct access method is used? Our fundamental principles should not disappear just because the formats have changed.

Mr. Kelley gave his view of the situation.   GPO at this point needs to have something useful, that is visible, that is focused and succeeds in order to move into the electronic arena and become a player. The Access bill provides a starting point with a core of two items. If GPO starts with high demand items, in user friendly formats, identifies depository libraries who have the resources and interest, who are able to provide the participation and evaluation of what worked, then GPO can take that and build on it as a prototype of what might work system wide. Unfortunately, funding is still an issue.

Discussion of the third cluster of scenarios, the relationships between different types of depositories, was incorporated into the discussion of the Dupont Circle Group document.

Dupont Circle Group Document

Jack Sulzer served as facilitator for the discussion on the Dupont Circle Group document. The discussion moved from GPO's role in all of this to the actual structure of the dissemination program. It was the general consensus of Council that the status quo was not a viable option.

The Dupont Circle Group document has as its Service Model 1 - Federal Information Service Centers. This is based on having three service levels - basic, intermediary, and full. Council had had some discussion about the basic service center yesterday. It was decided that the depository community should be surveyed to determine if enough interest exists for GPO to pursue this as a viable option. While it was decided that more than one core collection would be necessary (i.e. law, sci/tech, general), the incentives would still be reduced administrative overhead. The core list would not be restricted by format.

The intermediate service center seems to be the model of the average selective depository. What makes the intermediate service centers unique? How are they different from full service centers? It would appear that intermediates would serve as the linkage or transition between full and basic service centers. It became clear that intermediate service centers are very hard to describe since they cover a number of different people and collections.

The full service center seems to get into the role of regionals. What is the incentive for a library to be a full service center? Should full service centers act as libraries of last resort? It was hard to see full service centers as separate from regionals or subject based libraries. It was suggested that shared regionals might be the way to go - does every regional have to get everything? Or could 2-3 libraries share that responsibility for a given number of states?

Council Operations

Before Council wrote the following recommendations, they addressed some operational matters. Sandy Morton-Schwalb agreed to attend the NTIS Advisory Board meeting May 27-28, 1993 and report back to Council.

The Communications Committee reported on their meeting during the Federal Depository Conference April 22, 1993. The meeting addressed four communications questions, the comments of which are summarized on p. 16 of this issue of Administrative Notes. Some of the comments have been resolved as a result of Mr. DiMario's remarks yesterday. Although the Communications Committee didn't have any specific recommendations, they did throw some issues back to Council for discussion and action. Should a friends' group of GPO be established? Should an operations committee of Council be established to work with the GODORT Depository Operations Work Group? It is not the intent to have operational stuff brought to Council to deliberate. This committee would identify operational issues that needed an administrative response, communicate directly with GPO to resolve them, and report to Council, but that is all.

Should GPO explore the use of teleconferencing as a way of communicating Council deliberations to those individuals who are unable to attend the meetings? Should there be a Communications or Council column in Administrative Notes? Is there a way to make Administrative Notes more timely?

How can we get more agencies to participate at the Federal Depository Conference? Federal Publishers Committee will send out the information about the conference if they get it in time. It was also suggested that we get some agencies that have participated in the conference to write a one page article about the benefits to agencies in participating in the conference.

It was the feeling of Council that under the previous Public Printer the bylaws we had were not a reflection of what we were doing. Therefore, Council has drafted a mission and charter that is more flexible, allowing for both a policy role and an operational role for Council. In terms of the make-up of Council, it says "at least half will work in a depository library and have documents experience." Another change from the old by-laws is that the election of Chair is not dependent upon class. The mission and charter will be published in Administrative Notes to get community feedback and then be adopted at the Fall 93 Council meeting. [See p. 14 of this issue.]

Once the mission and charter are adopted they will be added to the "Handbook of the Depository Library Council" and then the Handbook will be disseminated to the depository community. It was suggested that this Handbook also go with the letter to various groups requesting names for consideration as potential Council appointees.

The next step for Council is to clean up its draft report, make the changes that resulted from this meeting, and get it out to the depository community as a discussion piece. It will be printed in Administrative Notes [see p. 18 of this issue], along with this summary of the meeting, as well as a comment sheet [see p. 55 of this issue], and Council members' names and addresses [see p. 59 of this issue]. Feedback on this report is needed to make it a depository community document.

Although it is hoped that this report will end up being a consensus document, stating what the depository libraries' view is of the future of the DLP, it is not Council's role to get this document into the hands of Congress and other decision makers. But this doesn't prevent others from taking the Council report and using it or appending it to other reports.

In the course of making recommendations, a number of things either got referred to the Fall meeting or it was felt a recommendation was not needed. The Council Corner in Administrative Notes is a given, Council just needs to submit material to the editor. The Communications Committee will continue to exist and Beth Duston will appoint a new member and chair in the Fall. It was suggested that the names of members of this committee as well as a statement of purpose be published in Administrative Notes.

It was the sense of Council that there is a problem with either the number of depository libraries or the way they are distributed, since there are too many in some areas. Although Council could not come up with a recommendation to address this problem, we encourage GPO to give this some consideration and invite GPO to work with Council on this. If

nothing changes before the Fall, Council will deal with this then.

The question was raised that as GPO moves into electronic access, is Council willing to tell GPO how much to spend on this endeavor? It was suggested that the information shared with the focus groups would be very valuable in determining this, that if Council members could get that financial data, then Council could address this in the Fall.

Council was not ready to make a recommendation on restructuring of the DLP. It is expected that this will be done at the Fall meeting once the community has had a chance to comment.

Gary Cornwell turned the gavel over to Beth Duston who is now Council Chair. Kay Schlueter was elected Secretary. Ms. Duston announced that Jack Sulzer will serve as her assistant until a Chair-Elect is chosen at the Fall meeting.

Submitted by:
Susan E. Tulis
Secretary

Recommendations
Depository Library Council
May 27, 1993

The Depository Library Council to the Public Printer offers the following recommendations to Michael DiMario, Acting Public Printer as a result of our Spring 1993 meeting:

1. Council agrees with the Acting Public Printer that meetings of the DLC should alternate between Washington D.C. and other cities around the country. However, it is the opinion of Council that there is value to holding the Spring Council meeting in Washington D.C. in conjunction with the Federal Depository Conference and Library Legislative Day.

   Consequently, we recommend that the Spring meeting remain in Washington D.C. and that the Fall meeting be "on the road." Airport "hub" cities, since they are easier and less expensive to get to, should be given first consideration as locations for road meetings.

2. GPO should experiment with teleconferencing the next DLC meeting as a prototype for improving communications with depository librarians and other interested stakeholders unable to attend the meeting.

3. Future Council meetings should be extended to at least 2 1/2 days and should include an

open forum discussion by observers on the specific DLC topic for that meeting. The open forum should be moderated by a member of Council.

4. Council strongly supports the appointment of more practicing documents librarians to the DLC than has been true in the recent past, but feels just as strongly that a balance must exist in the membership of Council between practicing librarians and other interested stakeholders.

5. An Operations Committee of Council should be established. The first charge of this committee would be to work with the GODORT Depository Operations Work Group (and other operations groups that might exist) to determine the best way to establish a single access point that libraries could contact for assistance with operational issues affecting the DLP.

6. Council strongly supports the short-term electronic goals of GPO (as articulated by the Superintendent of Documents*) with particular emphasis on the need for a real (and immediate) success in the online distribution of electronic information.

   *GPO at this point needs to have something useful, that is visible, that is focused and that succeeds. We need a visible success to move into this field. Because a lot of the stuff we are talking about is so changeable, the first thing we need to do is become a player. I am kind of interested in the Access bill because, in effect, it sets up a core. There are two things in the core to begin with and then it says as other agencies are willing to come forward more can be added. Hey, that's a start, right? If we do that successfully we are in the ballpark. And, I would say, as we move we would set up certain things we want to see included. You start with things that are of high level of interest. Why start with a low level of interest and insure there is no visible success? So, start with high demand items in the core list. And I would say we would deliver it in user friendly formats .... identifying the depository libraries who have the resources and the interest, who are able to provide the participation and the evaluation of what worked. Then we take that and build on it as a prototype for what might work system wide.

7. At a minimum, GPO should move into the electronic arena as defined in the GPO Access bills (H.R. 1328, S. 564), whether or not these bills become law. Inherent in this recommendation is that GPO would connect to the Internet and take the initiative in developing an online access program regardless of the outcome of these bills.

8. The type of software that was demonstrated before Council for the online Congressional Record is the kind of forward thinking, innovative software that we would like to see accompany all Congressionally produced electronic products. Council recommends that in instances where GPO has input into the level and quality of software that accompanies electronic products and services that this or similar level software be used.

9. Council should work with the Coalition for Networked Information (CNI) and with GPO to optimize results from the Coalition's Access to Public Information Program (APIP). In particular, Council is interested in ensuring that results from the "Connectivity of Depository Libraries" initiative that is part of APIP help provide the answers necessary to determine the feasibility of "electronic depositories."

10. Council recommends a moratorium on the establishment of new depository libraries.

11. Minimum technical requirements for existing depository libraries should be developed. In addition, it is the opinion of Council that libraries should be given a reasonable amount of time to meet these requirements. Failure to comply with these requirements after a reasonable period of time has passed should be treated as non-compliance and a major infraction of the rules for depository libraries.

12. The depository library community should be surveyed (with all deliberate speed) regarding potential interest in the following two ideas for short-term restructuring of the Depository Library Program:

    A) Basic Service Centers - a library could select a core collection but have no opportunity for other selections or changes. This would reduce overhead and maintenance for the library and reduce distribution costs for GPO.

    B) Cooperative regionals or multi-state regionals where the terms and conditions of being a regional are different from the current structure. For example, Regionals might not have to select 100% or might not be required to retain all material forever.

13. Council concurs with Mr. DiMario's reading of Congress that the bound Serial Set is a valuable resource tool for the depository community and should be available to all depositories wishing to select it. Council is willing to work with GPO to develop a less expensive method of producing this title.

14. Council supports the recommendation made by the Dupont Circle Group that the focus of the inspection program be changed to place more emphasis on education and training. In addition, Council believes that inspectors should rotate within GPO as ombudsman to communicate with libraries on depository issues.

15. GPO should explore the feasibility of distributing hardware to depository libraries to use electronic products. While this would probably require a revision to Title 44, long-term cost-savings by a "wholesale switch" to electronic distribution rather than traditional paper format would give credibility to this alternative.

16. GPO should solicit letters from Ken Rogers (Dept. of Commerce) and Phyllis Christenson (GAO) regarding the value of the Federal Depository Conference to agencies, either as vendor demonstrators or presenters at the conference. Letters would go to Federal Publishers Committee and other appropriate organizations for distribution to Federal agencies.

17. Should a stakeholders conference on the restructuring of the Depository Library Program be held, it is the strong opinion of Council that GPO should be an active participant.

Proposed Charter
Depository Library Council

The following document is proposed as a Charter for the Depository Library Council (DLC) to the Public Printer. It was tentatively approved by Council at the Fall 1992 meeting for operating purposes. The new Charter will supersede and replace the Council Bylaws that were printed in Administrative Notes, Volume 11, Number 17, pp. 8-10 (August 15, 1990). It is the belief of Council that the new Charter will allow the DLC the flexibility to advise the Public Printer on policy issues as well as on the day-to-day operational issues affecting the Depository Library Program (DLP). Council anticipates approving the new Charter at the Fall 1994 meeting. If you have any comments or suggestions regarding the proposed Charter, please forward them to Beth Duston, Chair, Depository Library Council.

Depository Library Council to the Public Printer

Mission

To assist the GPO in identifying and evaluating alternatives for improving public access to government information through the Depository Library Program (DLP) and for optimizing resources available for operating the Program.

Charter

The purpose of the Depository Library Council (DLC) to the Public Printer is to provide advice on policy matters dealing with the Depository Library Program as provided in Title 44, U.S.C. The primary focus of Council's work will be to advise the Public Printer, the Superintendent of Documents, and appropriate members of GPO staff on practical options for the efficient management and operation of the DLP.

The Depository Library Council shall be structured to provide the Public Printer with a diverse range of opinion and expertise. Additionally, it shall represent a cross section of the various types of libraries in the Depository Library Program. In order to meet this goal, at least half of the Council's members shall work in Depository Libraries and have experience in a Documents Department.

Membership

The Depository Library Council shall consist of fifteen members appointed by the Public Printer. The members shall serve three year terms, with five members retiring each year and five new members entering. The Council shall meet a minimum of twice each year with the meetings approximately six months apart. (Hereafter referred to as the Spring and Fall meetings.) New members shall be appointed prior to the Spring meeting and will assume duty at the Fall meeting. Vacancies on the Council will be filled in cases where the remaining term is at least 1 -1/2 years. All appointments to Council will be made by the Public Printer after consideration of recommendations from Council, library associations and

others as deemed appropriate by the Public Printer. Members may be appointed for additional terms.

Each Fall, members of the Depository Library Council shall select a Chair-elect of Council. The Chair-elect shall assume the office of Chair following the next Spring meeting. Members of Council may serve more than one term as Chair. The Chair shall preside over all meetings of Council, shall be responsible for the agendas for the Fall and Spring meetings, shall appoint such committees as necessary to carry out the duties of Council, and shall serve as direct liaison between Council and the Public Printer. In the absence of the Chair, these duties shall be carried out by the Chair-elect or in absence of the Chair-elect by a designate appointed by the Chair.

At the Spring meeting, members of the Depository Library Council shall elect a Secretary of Council. The Secretary shall assume office prior to the Fall meeting of Council. The Secretary may serve more than one term of office. It is the responsibility of the Secretary to prepare a summary report of each meeting for publication in Administrative Notes and posting on the Federal Depository Library Bulletin Board. The Secretary shall handle correspondence and other record keeping at the request of the Chair. In the absence of the Secretary, the Chair shall appoint a member of Council to serve in that capacity.

Notice of official meetings of the Depository Library Council shall be published in the Federal Register and mailed to members of Council at least 30 days prior to the meeting date. All such meetings will be open to the public.

This document may be modified by the Public Printer or by a majority vote of Council.

Report on Communications Committee Meeting, April 1993

Members of the committee are Carol Gordon, Sandy Morton-Schwalb, Jack Sulzer, and John Weiner. We held a meeting during the Federal Depository Users meeting on April 22 in order for members of the depository community who were attending the meeting to share their thoughts on a number of communications issues. We were very pleased with the large turn-out for this session, which was not part of the formal proceedings of the users meeting. In addition, we found the comments and questions thoughtful and thought-provoking.

The committee posed four questions, which had been publicized in advance in a memo to you on January 14, Administrative Notes, Documents to the People as well as posted on the listserv GOVDOC-L. Those questions were:

- How can the GPO and the Depository Library community communicate efficiently on operations issues and problems affecting depository libraries?

- How can the Depository Library Council and the depository library community best communicate?

- Is there a mechanism for the depository library community to have input to the agendas and lists of discussion issues for the Federal Depository Conference and the Inter-Agency Depository Seminar?

- Is there a systematic way for agencies and the depository community to communicate with one another?

Members of the committee will be discussing the outcomes of the April 22 meeting with the rest of Council, GPO staff, and observers during the Depository Library Council meeting, May 17-18. What follows, briefly, are some of the points raised by audience members during the "open forum."

Question 1) Operational issues were discussed. How are they being handled? The old council format of an open forum addressed these issues. One way to get these issues examined is through the operations subgroup of GODORT. These issues can also be addressed on GOVDOC-L, through a column in Administrative Notes, Documents to the People, etc. All vehicles should be examined. Can't rely completely on Internet, since not all libraries are "plugged in." This also applies to GPO, which is not on the Internet, and may not know about the various discussions of operational issues on GOVDOC-L. Perhaps operational issues/problems could be posted on the GPO bulletin board and make it interactive.

Administrative Notes is a useful tool. It should be mailed directly to depository librarians rather than in shipments. This avoids delays in receiving. There was concern raised about lack of proper indexing of Administrative Notes, which makes accessing articles difficult.

It was noted that many librarians do not feel they are getting a direct response from GPO

to their Inquiry Forms.

Question 2) It was suggested that the spring council meeting be held in conjunction with the annual users meeting (April). Divide depositories geographically into 15 regions and assign each council member a region to monitor. The community needs to know what the council is doing. What does the council need to know from the librarians? Move the council meetings around the country to get more librarians to attend. Get away from the notion of inside/outside the Beltway. Should council have its own newsletter?

There is so much information to digest. Is there some way to distill and condense the material? However, librarians have a responsibility to learn about these many issues which affect them and their institutions. The community needs to know which of the many legislative/regulatory initiatives best serves the libraries' interests in order to lend support or express opposition in a more unified manner.

The notion of having a separate group (some have suggested a "friends" organization) to support depository concerns. There were voices heard in support as well as opposition. Some felt there are already enough advocacy groups and members of the community can't afford the time to join another and attend more meetings. The other side said that the council should encourage an independent organization for the depository community to represent their specific concerns and interests, and don't leave this responsibility to the council or GPO. An independent group could also get those documents librarians in who are not ALA/GODORT members.

The concern was raised that fewer working documents librarians are being appointed to council and that the DLC is becoming a "dinosaur."

Question 3) Need to take information back to states for feedback. Members of the community, and/or those who are part of a new depository library group, could help to organize the conference. Needs a more varied format, and perhaps there needs to be different "tiers." Some sessions help beginners and others can be geared to more seasoned individuals. Make it a requirement (as part of being a depository) that librarians must attend a users meeting at least once every five years and put more "teeth" into the letter from GPO to library directors. Word such a letter to (diplomatically) insist that the depositories comply as part of their obligation.

It was noted that it is not always easy to get to these meetings. Not everyone can "come to Mecca." It is the responsibility of those attending these meetings to "spread the word" back home, through local networks, for instance.

GPO/JCP/agencies/librarians all have obligations here. All of the parties have somehow gotten around those responsibilities. Cooperation is needed. "Depositories are a responsibility not a right."

Question 4) Help to further the work of the Agency Liaison Program. Can GPO provide a list of individuals within agencies whom librarians can contact about depository issues? Is such a list available? Get list of depository libraries into the hands of agency information managers; send such a list to information resource managers electronically. Is

there contact between federal publishers and public information officers? (The answer seemed to be no, there is not).

Urge agency people who deal with depository issues/publishers, etc., to attend the users conference and interact with members of the depository community. Put an announcement about the users meeting in the Federal Register. There was a question as to whether it is posted there now?)

Some final comments included:

- Evident that people are interested in issue of communication by the turnout at this particular meeting (approximately 150, more than 1/2 of the conference attendees).

- It would be helpful for community to see organizational chart of GPO.

- Be persistent with agencies: write, call, stay in touch.

- Provide feedback to GPO on users meeting by filling out meeting evaluation form.

Alternatives for Restructuring
The Depository Library Program

Preface

Events of recent years, coupled with many long-standing problems within the Depository Library Program (DLP) have necessitated an examination of the Program and the various alternatives for its restructuring. The Depository Library Council to the Public Printer explored many of these issues at their Fall 1992 advisory meeting. Following that meeting, the assumptions, ideas, and suggestions they discussed were compiled into the following document.

While stopping short of making actual recommendations, the Depository Library Council presents a number of options that could eventually be developed into detailed proposals for restructuring the DLP. However, before that can take place, it is essential that librarians and other interested stakeholders in the DLP have an opportunity to comment on these alternatives and their potential impact on the Program.

Toward that end, Council urges anyone with an interest in the Depository Library Program to review the following document and to provide Council with their comments and observations. In addition, Council urges any group or organization that would like to use this report as a basis of discussion for restructuring the DLP to feel free to edit or refine the document to suit their needs. If specific recommendations or reports emerge from their

discussions, Council asks that copies of those documents be made available to as wide an audience as possible so that they too, can serve as the basis of future discussions.

Comments and suggestions regarding "Alternatives for Restructuring the Depository Library Program" should be sent to:

Mr. Jack Sulzer
Head, General Reference Section
Pennsylvania State University
E108 Pattee Library
University Park PA   16802

Alternatives for Restructuring
The Depository Library Program

A Report to the Superintendent of Documents and the Public Printer
from the Depository Library Council
April 1993

Discussion Draft
June 14, 1993

Contents

Assumption 1:   A Depository Library Program should and will continue to be a vital link between the citizens and the agencies of American government needing to distribute information.

Assumption 2:   As currently structured, the Depository Library Program is floundering so badly that its very existence is threatened. The Depository Library Council believes that significant restructuring of the Program is needed to ensure its future viability and to ensure that it will continue to meet the objectives for which it was established.

Assumption 3:   The burdens on the Regional Libraries are causing a breakdown in the system. The Depository Library Council believes that it may not be necessary for 52 regionals to keep everything in perpetuity, and that other aspects of the regionals' responsibilities may need to be re-examined.

Assumption 4: The cost of running the program is increasing faster than the willingness/ability of Congress to provide the funds. If this pattern continues, the program needs to find ways to leverage its resources.

Assumption 5: The Depository Library Program will contain both print and electronic information for the foreseeable future.

Assumption 6: As a result of the increased availability of electronic information via the INTERNET and other sources, user expectations concerning access to all forms of information will change and increase.

Assumption 7: Information professionals, in their roles as intermediaries, will continue to be a key part of the program.

Assumption 8: In the new information environment, there will be many more diverse points of access to information. The traditional library will be one centralized place for information, but there will be others as well.

Assumption 9: New laws, regulations, and information systems, and related changes in how government information is collected, maintained, and disseminated will have a major impact on the Depository Library Program.

Assumption 10: Some libraries will be partners in the change; some will not.

III. **Alternative Scenarios for a Restructured Program**

A.   The ARL Model--Multiple Service Levels

B.   The Direct Support Model

C.   A National Collection of Last Resort

D.   A Network of Super-Regionals

E.   A System of Electronic Depositories or Federal Electronic Distribution Sites (FEDS)

F.   Require libraries to meet minimum technical guidelines to be full participants in the system. Libraries unable to meet the guidelines could continue to receive core collection publications but not receive electronic data or other publications beyond the core.

G.   A System of Subject-Based Regionals Built on Existing Strengths

H.   Restructure the Depository program to recognize a new role when electronic government information comes through a network or a single point of access, such as through the GPO Gateway/Windo. Recognize that the DLP creates a foundation

for building electronic dissemination systems and that it can be a primary element in an active Federal information dissemination program.

I.   Rename the program to recognize changes brought on by the era of electronic information.

J.   Downsize the program to meet budgetary constraints.

I. History and Objectives of the Depository Library Program

A. History of the Depository Program

The Depository Library Program (DLP) is a national resource network designed to ensure free public access to government produced and published information. The commitment to public access to government information can be traced back to 1857 when it was resolved that printed documents should be made available to the public through official sources. In 1859, the Secretary of the Interior was given the statutory authority and responsibility to distribute all books (except those earmarked for the special use of Congress or Executive Departments) printed or purchased for the use of the Federal government. Ten years later, the Superintendent of Public Documents was created within the Department of the Interior and charged with the custody of government publications and their distribution.

Through the Printing Act of 1895, the Superintendent of Public Documents was renamed the Superintendent of Documents and transferred from the Interior Department to the Government Printing Office (GPO), which had been established in 1860. The Superintendent of Documents was given authority for the distribution and sale of government documents as well as for maintaining the Depository Library Program. In addition, the Printing Act of 1895 laid the groundwork for bibliographic control over government information and expanded the number of libraries eligible to participate in the Program. The Depository Library Act of 1962 established the network of Regional Libraries and further increased the potential number of depository libraries. It also expanded the number of categories of publications available for depository distribution. Efforts to reorganize the Government Printing Office and the Depository Library Program in 1979 were unsuccessful.

While the law has undergone several revisions over the years, the guiding principles of the Program have remained constant:

1) with certain specified exemptions, all government publications shall be made available to depository libraries;

2) depository libraries shall be located in each State and congressional district in order to make government publications widely available; and

3) these government publications shall be available for the free use of the general public.

Historically, the Federal government and the depository library community have shared equitably the costs associated with providing free public access to government information.

In recent years however, the trend has been for depository libraries to absorb more of the cost of providing citizens with government produced information. During the past decade, GPO's budget has remained relatively constant while the cost of producing and distributing the information has skyrocketed. At the same time, government information in electronic formats, such as CD-ROM, have placed additional burdens on the GPO. As a result, libraries have had to take on the additional expense of locating and acquiring fugitive Federal documents as well as the costs associated with computer/CD-ROM workstations, software, and technical support.

Consequently, the Depository Library Program is currently faced with two separate, but interrelated needs. First, GPO's funding must be increased to adequately fulfill the goals of the Depository Library Program. GPO must exert its potential to be the primary information packager for the Federal government. Second, the depository library system must be reorganized in a manner that will relieve some of the financial overhead from the program, while at the same time continuing to provide the American public with ready access to government information. The focus of this paper will be to document and explore the problems associated with the existing structure of the DLP and to offer some alternatives and strategies for its reorganization.

B. Values & Objectives of the Program

Describing the Depository Library Program, former Public Printer Danford L. Sawyer commented that countless Americans of all ages are using materials distributed through the DLP. He observed that it is one of the least recognized and most unique resources of our American public. No other nation in the world, he argued, has anything comparable in scope or in freedom of public access.[1] Indeed, it is hard to imagine any other program within the Federal government that is able to reach more Americans in such an economic manner.

Consisting of over 1400 libraries throughout the country, the DLP is predicated on the notion that all U.S. Federal documents--regardless of content or format--should be readily available to the American people. In addition, the Depository Library Program provides an effective, low cost mechanism for Federal agencies to disseminate government information to virtually every congressional district in the United States. The Program is also a supplemental source of government information for private sector industries to index, abstract, and enhance for the betterment of both libraries and the information-using public.

The result of these two factors is considerable. Through the distribution of all types and levels of government publications, the DLP has consistently met the research and informational needs of the American public. Indeed, it is the diverse needs of the end-user that drives the Program and makes it a vital source of information for citizens nationwide. Small businesses use census data; farmers use climatological data; and anyone may use legal

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[1] "Public Printer Supports Depository Library Program," Public Documents Highlights, 48/49 (October/December 1981): 1

and regulatory information. This program is vital to the economy insofar as the engine of the economy is the small businessman, farmer, or entrepreneur. At the same time, by ensuring public access to agency-produced information, the DLP has also helped to facilitate the accountability and openness of the Federal government.

Finally, the DLP has significantly enhanced the collections of depository libraries and consequently their ability to serve the public. In return, depository libraries invest considerable time, money and staff to receive, process, house, preserve and service the material. Indeed, according to the latest information available, the 52 regional depository libraries alone are spending more money to support their depository collections than the Federal government is to run the entire program. Unfortunately, libraries are currently facing the same fiscal restraints as the Federal government and are unable to continue the status quo. It is imperative that the equitable balance that once existed between libraries and the Federal government for supporting the Depository Library Program be re-established.

II. Assumptions

In considering the possible restructuring of the Depository Library Program, members of the Depository Library Council made several assumptions.

Assumption 1: **A Depository Library Program should and will continue to be a vital link between the citizens and the agencies of American government.**

Central to the basic program objectives of most Federal agencies is the provision of government information to the public, and for some agencies information dissemination is their principal mission. Most agencies that are heavily involved in information dissemination rely on the depository library system as one of several mechanisms for making their information available to the public; other mechanisms have historically included the Government Printing Office's document sales service, the Commerce Department's National Technical Information Service, private contractors, and agency programs to distribute their own products or to maintain information centers, bulletin boards, and other dissemination services.

Among all mechanisms, however, the depository library system is unique, in that it embodies the obligation of a democracy to keep all its citizens informed. In the spirit of its mission, it insures that agencies have an effective means of disseminating their information, and that the public has access to it regardless of economic status. In many cases it represents not only the primary, but also the only means that many citizens have of gaining access to the vast amount of government information. It also provides an important link between agencies and their user communities.

In addition to serving as a primary disseminator, the depository library system satisfies the requirement for long-term availability, serving as an "active archive" to which agencies can send their clients for information products no longer in production or inventory.

As agencies deemphasize traditional paper and film in favor of more efficient and, over

time, less expensive electronic information products and services, they will continue to need a nationwide library system through which government information, current and historical, remains physically, financially, and technologically accessible to the general public. As the traditional depository library system adapts to these changes, agencies will require more feedback from libraries than they have historically received concerning who their library clients are and how these changes will affect them.

Assumption 2:   **As currently structured, the Depository Library Program is floundering so badly that its very existence is threatened. The Depository Library Council believes that significant restructuring of the Program is needed to ensure its future viability and to ensure that it will continue to meet the objectives for which it was established.**

By any measure, the current structure of the Depository Library system is inadequate, inefficient, and ineffective. The introduction of electronic products and services into the program has exacerbated already existing problems, and the failure to develop an online service as part of the program has made GPO largely irrelevant for agencies seeking to disseminate information in that manner.[2] As a result of these problems, neither the information dissemination needs of government agencies nor the information needs of the public are being met.

For over 30 years, library literature has called for the restructuring of the DLP. More recently, the Government Documents Roundtable of the American Library Association (GODORT), the Depository Library Council, and the GPO itself have all suggested alternatives for a revitalized program. While no action has been taken on any of these proposals, preliminary agendas from the 103rd Congress indicate that now may be the ideal time for legislative reform.

To be more specific, in 1988, Peter Hernon and Charles McClure, long time observers and critics of the Depository Library Program, identified several weaknesses within the existing program:

■ The DLP is not a formal interlocking network of libraries; instead it is a diverse assortment of libraries with different goals and objectives and no coordinated collection development.

■ The geographic distribution of Depository Libraries creates an abundance of libraries in some areas of the country but leaves a shortage in other areas.

■ Neither the program itself nor the participating libraries have made as effective use of the new technologies for improved service as they could have.

■ Selection of "high quality" vs. "low quality" documents is difficult because of item

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[2] We understand that when the National Technical Information Service announced its bulletin board, many agencies expressed interest in using the system as a means of public access, thus bypassing GPO and the Depository Library Program.

number groupings.

■ Member libraries exercise limited direction and control over the Depository program.

■ There is frequently a lack of adequate support from host institutions in terms of personnel, physical facilities, and budget.

■ Poorly trained staff frequently service the Depository collection.

■ Substantial differences exist in the quality of reference and referral services among Depository Libraries.

■ Variations exist among Regional libraries concerning the provision of interlibrary loan, reference service, and assistance to Depository Libraries under their jurisdiction.

■ Many libraries provide only limited bibliographic control over their Depository publications.[3]

The development of new technologies has exacerbated the problems in many of these areas. For example, dissemination of information in electronic formats has necessitated the purchase of computerized workstations complete with CD-ROM drives, modems, and software. Additionally, staff's ability (or inability) to access digital information has widened the differences that already existed in the quality of reference/referral services offered by Depositories. New technologies have also exposed the woeful lack of training and support that Depository Libraries receive from Federal agencies.

Assumption 3: **The burdens on the Regional Libraries are causing a breakdown in the system. The Depository Library Council believes that it may not be necessary for 52 regionals to keep everything in perpetuity, and that other aspects of the regionals' responsibilities may need to be re-examined.**

The current "Regional Depository Library System" was created by the Depository Library Act of 1962. This act allows a maximum of two Depository Libraries per state to be designated Regional Depositories, or "Regionals." In addition to the obligations required of all Depositories, the Regionals have the following additional responsibilities:

1. Permanently retain all (100%) of government publications distributed through the Depository Library Program. (Selective Depositories have only a minimum five-year retention period, and they may select any percentage of publications distributed).

2. Attempt to complete their retrospective collections of Federal government publications by means of purchase, exchange, or gift.

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[3] Peter Hernon and Charles McClure, Public Access to Government Information: Issues, Trends, and Strategies (Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing Corp., 1988), 367-69.

3. Permit Selective Depositories to dispose of unwanted government publications, after reviewing disposal lists submitted by the Selectives. Regionals screen the lists in order to add to their own collections and to ensure future availability of those titles in their region. Regionals must also make sure that the publications on the lists are offered to other libraries in the area before being discarded.

4. Provide interlibrary loan and reference service based on their Regional collection to all Depository and non-Depository Libraries in their region.

5. Contribute to the effectiveness of the Depository network in their region through workshops, training sessions, and consultive services (including designation and termination of Selective Depositories).

6. Take an active part in the GPO Depository inspection process, preferably by accompanying Library Inspectors on their visits.

Citing these extra responsibilities, one library recently relinquished its Regional status, and others are seriously considering doing so. They can no longer accept the level of burden placed upon them. A number of factors have contributed to this situation and have led to major discrepancies in the ability of Regionals to perform their additional responsibilities.

One of the factors is the geographic distribution of Depository Libraries. Since the number of Depositories per state varies widely, and since most states have only one designated Regional (that in some cases is responsible for other states as well), there is a severe imbalance in the ratio of Selectives being served by the 51 Regionals. As a result, inequities range from nine out of 51 Regionals serving 40% of all Depositories to nine Regionals serving 6% of the libraries in the Depository system. Two Regionals (the California and New York state libraries) alone are responsible for 14% of all Selective Depositories.

Another factor affecting the Regionals' ability to serve Selective Depositories within their region is the cost of being a Regional Depository. The estimated annual cost per Regional library to provide the required services and maintenance of its Federal document collection in 1991 was approximately $500,000; the annual cost for all Regionals therefore is about $25,500,000, more than the total GPO budget for the Depository Library Program.[4] Most Regionals do not have adequate resources -- staff, space, equipment, and funding for training, travel, indexes, collection development, and telecommunications -- to carry out all of their obligations under the law. Depository publications may come to the library free of charge, but considering GPO's estimate of $100,000[5] for the value of documents received annually by the Regionals, the Regionals have to spend five times as much as their collection is worth in order to fulfil their responsibilities.

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[4] U.S. Congress, Joint Committee on Printing, "Government Information as a Public Asset", 102nd Cong., lst sess., April 25, 1991, 24-25, (hereinafter ciated as "Government Information as a Public Asset").

[5] Cite

These problems are compounded by the increase in electronic government information being distributed through the Depository Library Program. Will Regionals be expected to provide the same level of services for government information distributed in CD-ROM, online databases, and via satellite transmission that they now do for paper and microfiche formats -- ensuring all Depository items are available and accessible within their region? Very few Regionals, if any, are equipped to provide training, service, and access to all electronic Depository information as part of their required reference and interlibrary loan service to libraries in their region.

Assumption 4: **The cost of running the program is increasing faster than the willingness/ability of Congress to provide the funds. If this pattern continues, the program needs to find ways to leverage its resources.**

Costs for the Depository Library Program come out of the Salaries and Expenses (S&E) portion of GPO's annual appropriation. Approximately 83.4% of the S&E appropriation funds this program. The other 16.6% fund three other programs. In FY 1992 GPO received just over $27 million for these four programs. While it is true that the S&E funding went up by $1.5 million in FY 1991 and by $1.3 million in FY 1992, the effects of inflation over time have significantly reduced the purchasing power of the S&E dollars.

In 1980 the S&E appropriation was $23.2 million. By 1992 it had increased $3.9 million to $27.1 million. This amount, representing a nominal 16.8% increase, has the buying power of 13.5 million 1983 dollars - a net loss of 50.2% in real terms. The depository library portion of the S&E appropriation sustained an even greater loss in purchasing power (50.4%). In FY 1980, GPO had $17.1 million for depository library distribution; in FY 1992, GPO had $22.6 million. What appears to be $5.5 million in growth, when adjusted for inflation, represents purchasing power of $11.2 million in FY 1983 dollars,[6] a loss of $5.9 million in constant (1983) dollars.

It is also important to note that during this same time period, GPO added 50 new libraries to the program, thereby requiring GPO to serve more libraries with less money.

Assumption 5: **The Depository Library Program will contain both print and electronic information for the foreseeable future.**

Over the last 25 years, the Depository Library Program has witnessed changes to the formats which are distributed by the Government Printing Office to libraries. Once almost exclusively a print-based program, some sets began to be distributed in microform in the late 1960's and early 1970's. Now, a substantial part of the total distribution is made in microform. In the meantime, many agencies are creating information products in electronic form, and the need to distribute that information through the program has become evident. Moreover, as the public has become more computer literate, it is requesting access to certain products in an online form. Among the most conspicuous requests for online versions of

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[6] Cite.

existing products are the requests for an online Congressional Record and an online Federal Register. The Toxic Release Inventory is a popular product, available online from the National Library of Medicine, not from GPO, and not through the Depository Library Program.

Response by GPO to the need to distribute electronic information has been tentative and hesitant at best, rather than assertive and forward looking. Consistent with its past practices, GPO has been willing to distribute information products on disk through the Depository program. Examples include the National Trade Data Bank, the Toxic Release Inventory, and several others. However, GPO has been reluctant to explore bulletin boards and other online technology to make online information more readily available. Nonetheless, the Depository Library Council believes that the trend toward electronic distribution is well established and will grow rather than shrink. As a result, we believe that for the foreseeable future, the program -- if it survives at all -- will have to combine access to information in many forms, some print, some on disk, and some electronic online.

Some materials will or should stay in print (and some should be available in both print form and electronic form). Among them are the core materials (Congressional Record, and Federal Register, etc.) that are distributed widely and read closely so that citizens can stay abreast of the actions and activities of their government. These materials are of such vital importance to our democratic society that access to them should not be restricted to those who have access to a computer. Also included in the list of materials that should remain in print are those that are intended to be read cover to cover, rather than merely checked as a reference. These include booklets, reports to consumers, brochures, etc. People read faster from paper than from screens. Similarly, reports and items containing complex material should also, in many cases, be distributed in print, because they are more intelligible when viewed in the context of a whole document rather than as isolated screens. Finally, some materials require browsing. Large amounts of text cannot be browsed easily from a computer file.

On the other hand, numeric data and other materials are often intended to be used as computer files, and they must be published electronically. In such cases, paper publication is not only unnecessary, it is also wasteful. Software to support such statistical applications is already readily available, but documentation of the data on tape or on CD-ROM is needed so that data can be extracted and downloaded as needed.

Furthermore, dynamic databases such as economic statistics need to be updated regularly, and must be available online so that people can have access to the latest data. Both CD-ROM and print publication delay the transfer of this important information.

Many items, however, can be stored on CD-ROM or tape and can be printed on demand. Examples might include Congressional hearings, or other voluminous files used primarily for reference. In these cases, the library could save the space previously required in the library for paper, but users could quickly get a print of the specific material they needed. One of the highest costs of being a depository is the cost of space, and the probability of any government or academic institution creating more space for the storage of paper material is decreasing with each passing year.

Assumption 6:   As a result of the increased availability of electronic information via the INTERNET and other sources, user expectations concerning access to all forms of information will change and increase.

The number of people with access to the Internet has been increasing at an accelerating rate for the last several years. With the passage of the NREN legislation in the 102d Congress, the network will continue to expand in both speed and capacity. In the 103d Congress, S.4 contains provisions designed to follow up on the original NREN legislation and to extend network access much further, most especially into schools and libraries throughout the country. Since the concept is a high priority to Vice President Gore and the program is an important part of the Clinton-Gore economic stimulus package, it can be expected that in some fashion the provisions of S.4 will be passed. As a result, it seems entirely likely that within the next few years connectivity to the Internet/NREN will be available to all libraries. In addition to providing much wider access to the information stored on the net, accessing data via the Internet can help individual libraries save on storage space and provide them with the ability to download only what they need for their clients.

In addition to the investment being made at the Federal level, investments in telecommunications are also being made at the local, state and regional levels. Several states are building statewide networks that will also bring high speed networks into schools and libraries, and quite possibly, even into the home. No doubt, these investments will continue for the next 5 - 10 years, making it increasingly possible for more people to gain electronic access to all types of information.

As more people have access to the network and more information is made available in that way, there seems to be little doubt that it will quickly become a primary vehicle for the delivery of basic information to American citizens. This vision is already taking shape with the development of local Freenets which make available, among other things, community information, news, and weather, as well as local, state, and Federal government information.

Assumption 7:   Information professionals, in their roles as intermediaries, will continue to be a key part of the program.

As these new networks develop, citizens will face an increasingly complex information world. Faster networks, electronic storage of information and telecommunications have already exponentially increased an individual's opportunity to access and receive information. Information sources have also increased with, for example, over 2,000 vendors already producing CD-ROM's. In addition, the proliferation of new information technologies used in the home, such as fax and interactive video, has made citizens acutely aware of their power and potential. With all these information resources available in a variety of formats, understanding how to use and access them is critical if citizens are to be prepared to function as fully participating members of society. Information professionals such as librarians can fill an important role in helping citizens navigate through this complex information world.

All information professionals share similar traits; they know where to find the answers, how to organize information, how to communicate with man and machine, and they know about the latest information technologies. Anyone may be able to find an answer to anything,

but is it the right or the best answer? The information professional is trained to identify the best sources for quality information.

Information professionals also know how to organize information. Unorganized information is not information at all -- it's just data. Take, for example, the current dilemma with the 1990 census data; in order to be replicated in the 1980 format, it needs to be processed through three separate software programs. The typical interested citizen has certain expectations regarding census information and simply handing him or her a CD-ROM containing the raw data is not satisfactory.

However, the information professional's unique skill is the ability to communicate. Webster described information as "the communication or the reception of knowledge". Understanding the logic stream to a question, and translating it back to the individual, demands unique communication skills that cannot be replaced by artificial intelligence, at least not in the near future.

The information professional also plays a critical role in the development of more useful and usable information products and technologies. No one works more closely with the end-user, knows the requirements of the user better, and can have a greater impact on the future of information technology than the information professional.

While all of this is true, the rapid pace of change also makes it necessary for librarians to be constantly updating their skills, to learn to manage information using the newest electronic systems. In addition, in view of the large number of datafiles being distributed, librarians also need training in manipulating numeric data and responding to requests for information presented in a tailored fashion. Extraction of data from CD-ROM or tape, for example, will require more human resources in depository libraries. Librarians need to know how to manipulate the data and how to produce a custom product for each requestor.

Assumption 8: **In the new information environment, there will be many more diverse points of access to information. The traditional library will be one centralized place for information, but there will be others as well.**

With the new information environment, users may not need to come to the library to fill their information needs. Electronic information allows dial in access from a number of locations. While the traditional library will be one centralized place for information, other locations may exist as well. The establishment of the National Research and Education Network, which will build an information "super highway", guarantees access to government information for all citizens through libraries, distribution programs, community learning centers and the information highway.

Depository libraries may play the role of providing local network access and making the network function rather than simply receiving, storing, and providing access to paper copies. Like the Depository Library Program which reaches every Congressional district, public schools reach every neighborhood in the country. Once schools are on the network, this will be another access point. Any number of other scenarios can be envisioned as local, state, and regional networks grow and become interconnected. For example, you could go to your local

government building and through a terminal there be connected to the network, thereby accessing needed information. Kiosks could be set up in shopping malls, very much like the mini-libraries that now exist in some malls.

Assumption 9: **New laws, regulations, and information systems, and related changes in how government information is collected, maintained, and disseminated will have a major impact on the Depository Library Program.**

The Depository Library Program is over 100 years old and the last major revision of Title 44 was in 1962. There are many in the library/information community who infer from this fact that Title 44, as written, does not take into account new technologies and that the Government Printing Office might not have a mandate to distribute government information in new electronic formats. This remains a divisive issue.

Some have argued that GPO has statutory authority under Title 44 to disseminate all government information regardless of the format in which it is stored. GPO's General Counsel opinions in 1982 and 1989 provided different viewpoints in this debate. Another opinion from the GPO General Counsel in 1990 does expand the definition of a "government publication" to include "government information presented in an electronic format." Does this, however, provide a definitive answer? The question remains as to whether GPO can afford to embark on a new electronic course without a clearcut mission to do so.

Further, if GPO does forge ahead in the electronic arena, Federal agencies still are not mandated to provide their products and services (regardless of format) which they produce, for distribution to the DLP.

In a 1991 legal opinion of the GPO General Counsel about cost sharing, there is a footnote in which it is stated that:

"Our review of the legislative history indicates that technological advancements in the field of information compilation and dissemination have outstripped, in many instances, the expectation of Congress when it passed the Depository Library Act of 1962. Regardless of this anachronism, both this office (GPO General Counsel) and the Joint Committee on Printing have construed Title 44 to encompass Government information presented in electronic format, although electronic products are not expressly included in the definition of Government publications."

Another question to consider is whether this (or previous) legal opinion(s) could be overturned or revised should there be a different General Counsel or Public Printer. "Legislative intent" is always open to interpretation unless there is definitive language contained in public laws.

Title 44 must be fully re-examined in light of the new technologies available for information dissemination. If there is a revision, it cannot and should not be done in a piecemeal manner. It is the guiding force of the GPO operations and any changes should be positive and not done to negatively impact the depository or sales programs. All stakeholders

must be part of the debate, and that includes JCP and other congressional committees which have some relationship to the operations of GPO, the depository community, library/information associations, Federal agencies, the information industry, public interest groups, and the oft-discussed "users" of government information.

It is also a given, however, that when there is legislative overhaul of a program, this could bring out the "enemies," in this case, those who might want to restrict the scope of the program, as well as the "friends," who see a need to expand the mandate for GPO operations.

It is imperative that Members of Congress be educated about the DLP. The 110 freshmen members of the House of Representatives and the new Senators must be taught by their constituents about the value of the program and its cost-effectiveness. They must understand what the program offers to citizens -- their constituents. But they must be convinced NOT only because the DLP offers an information "safety net" or that citizens are entitled to access information about their government. In these budget cutting times, there must be a case made for how the DLP provides an economic advantage to citizens, helps small businesses, aids in this country's competitiveness, etc. The new Administration in Washington came in on the theme of "change" and the DLP and the depository community must be willing to advance that theme.

This is especially important in the area of funding -- how to convince Congress to adequately fund the GPO/DLP so that electronic products and services are an integral part of the depository program.

Some specific areas which should be examined in reviewing Title 44 include:

■ Sec. 1911 which mentions keeping permanent copies in either paper or microform -- should this also include electronic records? What if the material is available only in electronic format?

■ The legislation calls for depositories in each congressional district -- what happens when there is redistricting, as we have seen since the 1990 Census? What changes can or should be made so that some areas of the country are not so "information rich" at the expense of the "information poor"?

■ Is the system of using congressional districts for setting up depositories the best approach? Does this offer the best framework through which information is disseminated?

■ Does sec. 1903 provide a cost disincentive to agencies to provide copies of their material to the DLP since they can have their information printed elsewhere?

■ The Public Printer has stated in congressional testimony that "legislative action is needed to clarify Title 44 and explicitly incorporate publications in electronic format."

The Office of Technology Assessment's Report "Informing the Nation," urges Congressional action to resolve Federal information dissemination issues and to set direction

for policies. Discussions about national and Federal information policy issues will have a major impact on any potential changes to the Depository Library system. Federal agencies are using more and more electronic products and services. Statutes should keep ahead of the times and not just play "catch up."

OMB Circular A-130 in its latest revision (April 1992), while noting that Federal agencies should "ensure that government publications are made available through depository libraries," created a number of loopholes for agencies to avoid utilizing the program. The circular provides a narrow definition of a "government publication" and in essence creates a difference between paper and electronic formats. This difference would allow Federal agencies to use the argument they need not provide electronic products and services to GPO for distribution to the DLP. The writers of the circular note that:

> "...the definition of "government publication" in 44 USC 1901 is: 'informational matter which is published as an individual document'.... OMB does not understand that this definition, on its face, includes electronic data files, software, online information services, or the like .... Therefore, OMB believes it is not clear that agencies have a legal obligation to make electronic products available to depository libraries."

Although the circular goes on to say that "as a matter of policy" Federal agencies should make electronic products (services are not mentioned) available to the DLP, such a negative approach sends the wrong signal to agencies. What are agency officials more likely to base their own dissemination policy on -- Circular A-130 which provides guidance to executive branch agencies in the area of information policy or a legal opinion of the GPO General Counsel (an agency located in the legislative branch) relating to provision of information in electronic formats?

With a new administration and therefore new officials at OMB, it is possible that there will be further revisions to A-130. Whether these revisions will take a more positive stance toward the DLP and the role of agencies remains to be seen. But it is something members of the depository community need to be aware of and they could make their concerns known as the guard changes at OMB.

As policy makers are working on "building" NREN, the depository community and the library world as a whole must be viewed as stakeholders in the process. The new administration will be closely linked to the notion of an electronic super-highway due largely to Senator Gore's work on the NREN bill and other allied legislation. There is a strong link with Senator Gore also because of his association with the JCP over the past years.

If the DLP is to have a viable role in the electronic information age, it and the community must be part of the NREN. The position paper produced by GODORT/ALA in March 1991 titled, "National Research and Education Network and the Federal Depository Library Program," provides strong arguments as to why the DLP should be included in the NREN. It might be worthwhile for the paper to be updated in light of the new administration and new agency heads being appointed.

But while there are many in the depository community who are conversant with the issues

in this area, it is important that GPO is as well. There were many concerns raised during discussion of the GPO WINDO bill that the agency was not equipped to handle these new technological advances. It might be well for the agency to look to the depository community for expertise in some of these areas. This could forge a strong partnership between the depository community and GPO.

A final item--or rather a question for further study-- is where the regional Bell operating companies (RBOC's) fit into the scheme of things. If and when RBOC's can begin offering information services, how might that affect depositories? Will there be any impact? Will this mean more players in the information industry repackaging and selling government information? Might this help by increasing competition in that industry?

Assumption 10:   Some libraries will be partners in the change; some will not.

As the Depository Library Program moves towards restructuring due to the addition of electronic access and/or the need to control the cost of the program, some libraries will be partners in this change, while others will not. There are already many differences among depository libraries in terms of the services they now provide. With the move to electronic access, it must be accepted that some libraries will not be able to participate due to a lack of financial support, necessary equipment, or technical expertise.

While Council does not support denying information access to any depository library, it must be recognized that this may be the result if some libraries do not have the capability of handling electronic government information. The change in how government information is delivered will happen, with or without a restructured Depository Library Program. But a restructured program will allow those depository libraries which do have electronic access to obtain that information and to assist those libraries that do not.

III. Alternative Scenarios for a Restructured Program

A. The ARL Model--Multiple Service Levels

In 1988, the Task Force on Government Information in Electronic Format of the Association of Research Libraries explored the changing relationship between the Federal government and depositories libraries. The Task Force noted that, "Government information -- its creation and dissemination -- is a microcosm of the elements and layers of a new paradigm for libraries" and that "the prospect of GPO providing government information in electronic format for depositories accelerates the need for libraries to address the shifting paradigm."

Recent ARL statistics illustrate the depth and breadth of this shifting paradigm and how significant this shift has become in a relatively short period of time. 1990-91 ARL Statistics provide evidence that research libraries "are increasingly moving from the traditional supply or warehouse model, to a demand or access model for providing information to users. ARL libraries are moving from the "just in case" model of on-site resources to the "just in time" model of resource sharing. "

A recent survey intended to provide a snapshot of ARL libraries' activities considered key elements of a research library of the future -- electronic document delivery, electronic journals, full text database access, network access, and the like -- provides additional evidence of how widespread this shift is and how it is influencing ARL libraries' services and operations. The survey found that a large number of institutions are making "notable commitments to electronic networked systems and services." (ARL, a Bi-monthly Newsletter no. 163, Toward a Realization of the Virtual Library, Nancy Schiller, and Barbara von Wahlde) For example, 85% of the respondents are using or developing electronic document delivery services and 66% are providing access to electronic full text.

And finally, interlibrary loan data demonstrates the continuing reliance upon research libraries for resources and an increase in interlibrary loan activity. Because of the breadth and depth of their collections, research libraries tend to serve as resource collections for other libraries. As more multi-type libraries have used OCLC or RLIN for retrospective and current cataloging, the presence of their holdings in these networks has spread interlibrary loan requests among a larger number of libraries, although the general pattern of research libraries as net lenders seems to be continuing. Since 1981, while lending by ARL libraries has grown 155%, borrowing has grown by 206%. ARL Statistics for FY 1990 documents a total of 5.2 million items loaned or borrowed.

The speed with which this shifting paradigm has been introduced and integrated into research libraries can be attributed to numerous factors -- constrained budgets, the serials crisis, new opportunities and services resulting from computer and telecommunications investments and programs, changing user information needs and requirements including increased demand due to more effective bibliographic and access measures, increasing reliance upon electronic resources, and more. As noted elsewhere in this paper and in the forthcoming paper, "Problems and Issues Affecting the U.S. Depository Library Program and the GPO: The Librarian's Manifesto," (forthcoming in Government Publications Review) there is ample evidence that documents collections in participating depository libraries are a part of/or are experiencing many of these same pressures and opportunities. These pressures result in these authors reaching the same conclusion as the ARL Task Force on Government Information in Electronic Information -- that there is a pressing need to review and assess the Depository Library Program on a number of fronts, including the questionable value of retaining its current structure given the shifting paradigm.

The ARL proposal for a restructuring of the depository program or a variation of it is still valid today. And such a reassessment of the program should be conducted in light of one central and underlying assumption: a program that provides equitable, no-fee access to basic public information for all citizens should be retained and in fact strengthened through any restructuring proposals.

There remains the commitment to the role that libraries have always played: provider of no-fee access for the general public to government information. What is highlighted by the prominence of electronic information is that not all government information is the same and that the level of user accessibility provided for electronic products varies tremendously depending on the system characteristics provided by the government or added to it by libraries or other intermediaries. Government information defined as essential for fulfilling the citizenship information needs of the public and for fulfilling government responsibilities

should be distributed to depository libraries in a manner that allows libraries to make it available at no fee.

There is also the understanding that with the introduction of new services such as the GPO WINDO, there are also new responsibilities that must be addressed in a restructuring proposal. For example, although a library providing Basic Services could access the GPO Gateway directly, the request could be for retrospective information no longer available via the agency or GPO. The role of Full Service libraries vis-a-vis issues relating to indexing, archiving, and related long-term access issues will need to be addressed.

The ARL model (see Technology & U.S. Government Information Policies: Catalysts for New Partnerships, 1988) proposed the following redefinition of depository library service responsibilities in which government documents and gateways to government information will be focused along the following lines:

BASIC Services:

This level of depository library would serve as an information center in which there would exist a small government document collection and a computerized gateway to electronic government information located elsewhere (e.g. GPO WINDO, an Intermediate, or a Full service depository). The service might be focused more on self-help and on-demand levels.

INTERMEDIATE Services:

This level of depository library would maintain a larger government document collection and some electronic information and gateways to other electronic information located elsewhere. This library might devise products which would work well through the gateways and might invest in developing value-added approaches to the government information. The service would include more mediation and synthesis than the Basic level.

FULL Services:

This level of depository library would contain research level government documents and a full range of electronic information and the most sophisticated gateways to other electronic information. The depository collection would be supplemented by related, locally available databases. The level of service would include the highest levels of value-added characteristics. There would be developed software packages and other approaches which would change wholesale government information into retail government information. There would be some level of Federal support for the Full Service libraries.

Roles for depository library participants may change in some or all of the following ways. First, since requirements for equipment, staff to support a full-service electronic depository collection and the growing amount of resources available are considerable, the program may be well served by having just a few libraries support multi-state or national public information needs as part of the program. From this there may develop varying levels of responsibility for providing services for electronic and other information products. Some depository libraries may not be able to afford the equipment and/or staff support to provide

services for certain kinds of government information in electronic form. Location, however, becomes less consequential given the increasingly reliance upon networks for access to resources recalling however, that the economics of resource sharing may be different. All depositories will require equipment and staff proficiency to provide effective access to electronic resources.

B. The Direct Support Model[7]

Depository libraries currently play only a limited role in determining the distribution policies and patterns of the depository system as a whole. The fundamental design of the present system is quite simple: regional depositories receive everything distributed by GPO; selective depositories generally opt to receive items in a recommended basic collection, plus whatever additional items are appropriate to the library's mission and responsive to the needs of the public which it serves. The information and incentives for managing the depository program, to the extent that they exist at all, are centralized at GPO.

There is a widely held perception that the obligations imposed upon regionals for (a) comprehensive receipt of publications in multiple media, (b) indefinite retention of at least one copy of each publication, and (c) service to other libraries within the region are too burdensome and inflexible. The model of fifty-plus regional libraries all performing what is often (and incorrectly) described as an archival function, along with other functions that owe more to a paradigm of government property management than to any theory of library service, is becoming less sustainable with each passing year.

Selective depositories, for their part, are able to choose the categories of publications that they wish to receive. However, they have little incentive to consider the economic impact of their choices upon the whole depository system, and, even if they attempt to do so, they have very limited tools for participating in the optimum allocation of resources. The subject of cooperation between selective depositories is not well developed in GPO's "Instructions to Depository Libraries." Officially, at least, most cooperation must be mediated by the regional depository. Moreover, the limited autonomy that government documents departments have in most depository libraries, together with the need for the library as a whole to conform to broader institutional policies, tends to reduce the scope of potential contributions by an individual library to system-wide management.

The flaws of the present system have been more fully described in other sections of this report, and even more extensively in the growing body of literature on the subject. Many, if not all, of these flaws can be traced to a fundamental structural weakness of the system: the member libraries that serve as the critical link to the ultimate beneficiaries -- the public at large -- are not empowered to participate in managing the system to best advantage.

Federal funding has always been restricted to support of document reproduction and distribution, and has been estimated to constitute less than half of the full cost of the

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[7] The ideas in this section reflect some of the perspectives of the information industry. However, this section is not, and should not be construed as, a position statement of the Information Industry Association.

depository system.[8] But decisions that determine how the Federal resources will be allocated largely control the disposition of resources for the entire system. For example, the government's decision to distribute a certain proportion of titles in microform virtually mandates a certain corresponding level of expenditure by a regional library -- and by many selectives as well -- for the procurement of microform viewing, storage, and replication equipment, as well as for associated staffing and maintenance. Moreover, the likelihood of long-term constraints on Federal spending suggests that if the present system is maintained, there will not be enough money to continue distribution at current levels, to say nothing of meeting the complex distribution challenges posed by the growing body of agency-produced electronic publications.

The Depository Library Program is desperately in need of ways to maximize the return on every Federal dollar expended. It is equally urgent that the system enable depository libraries themselves to show a return on their investment in the system, expressed in terms of service to the public and perhaps in terms of other institutional goals as well.

Reforming the depository system may involve many elements of change. But the one change that would most effectively align available resources with the "demand" registered by library patrons for government publications would be to give libraries control over how depository resources are allocated.

The proportion of overall depository reproduction and distribution costs that are necessary to supply a particular library with its free publications represents the germ of a budget. Each depository's budget can in fact already be considered to exist, albeit in just a latent sense in the present system. The aggregate budget for the entire depository system -- a very real figure for GPO -- is nothing more than the sum of the costs incurred to serve each depository, even if the latter costs are not currently isolated. The question is not whether each depository has its own budget. Rather, the question is whether the necessary information and incentives will be developed to manage that budget for the maximum benefit of the American public.

Fortunately, an essential preliminary step toward giving libraries control over how the expenditures dedicated to their support are allocated will be taken by 1994, when the GPO Library Programs Service's Acquisitions, Classification, and Shipment Information System (ACSIS) is scheduled to have the capacity to report on the cost of each depository publication distributed. This capability will make it possible to calculate the cost of supporting any depository library merely by summing the cost of all the publications that it receives, and perhaps adding to that sum a standard proportion of GPO administrative costs.

The next step would be to let libraries have a voice in the disposition of the resources that are now used for their support. This is in fact already being done, but only through a sporadic, command-oriented, crisis-driven process, as represented by GPO's letter to depositories of Nov. 18, 1992 announcing certain curtailments in distribution, asking for voluntary cutbacks in depository selections, and seeking depositories' reactions to additional possible cuts. The only incentive that depositories have to curtail their selections is their hope

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[8] "Government Information as a Public Asset", nt. 4, supra at 24-25.

that such action will prevent deeper future cuts affecting the entire system. In such circumstances, it is very difficult for an individual library to make rational assessments of the costs and benefits associated with GPO's "either/or" propositions.

Assuming that for the indefinite future there will be limited funding relative to the costs of distributing all Federal depository publications in a variety of media, it would be much more productive to entrust libraries with the authority to choose at the start of each Federal fiscal year how the library's share of depository funds is to be spent. This would help depository librarians to more fully evaluate the consequences of their selections and would provide a basis for making rational trade-offs. Coupled with cooperative collection development within each region, this approach would enable each library to tailor its selection practices to match its own needs much more closely than is possible today.

The question of what base should be used to determine the size of a library's individual budget obviously could be decided in various ways, but should not present an insurmountable obstacle. Perhaps selection patterns for the immediate past year, or for several previous years, would provide a basis from which to start. A library might decide not to use all of its budgeted selection authority each year. Since even free publications incur costs once they are acquired by the library, the same forces that today lead selective depositories not to select everything would continue to operate.

Once a system is in place that gives libraries responsibility for how "in-kind" government aid, in the form of free publications, is allocated, it would be attractive to consider expanding libraries' options by making Federal support available as more widely convertible credits that could be used for a variety of purposes in support of depository responsibilities. One could envision GPO's depository distribution operation becoming a more closely related adjunct to the GPO sales program, with a library "paying" for individual items with "depository credits." Eventually, ACSIS should be able to support a more dynamic selection process, so that a depository could choose to receive an individual title at any time up to GPO's placement of the replication order. The library could choose to use its credits to obtain multiple copies of some items, and items placed by GPO in its general sales program could be purchased at some time later than the date of original distribution. As electronic media move into the mainstream of the GPO sales program, and as GPO begins to take advantage of print-on-demand technology, it should be feasible to expand the number of items that are available through the sales program, and to keep them "in print" indefinitely.

Additionally, it should be possible to arrange for the use of depository credits for acquisitions on concessionary terms from NTIS. Such credits could also be applied to the purchase of dedicated electronic equipment, commercially produced document sets, and "non-government reference tools" such as those recommended in the "Guidelines for the Depository Library System."[9] Software and databases from government and non-government sources would also be eligible for purchase.

Such a plan would make it clear what could be obtained, by an individual library and by

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[9] Guidelines for the Depository Library System, as adopted by the Depository Library Council, revised 1987, Guideline 4-2 (Washington, D.C.: USGPO, 1988).

the whole depository system, for a given level of expenditure. The participation of multiple suppliers would require GPO to offer high standards of service, as measured by comparison to the alternatives available to libraries rather than merely by internal assessments. Moreover, libraries would be the judges of the adequacy of that service, and could send messages in the form of choices about how they allocate their depository credits.

Such a development would actually come as good news for GPO. The burdens of depository system administration would be reduced. A rationalized depository system that empowers libraries and provides for multiple sources of supply would elicit broader support for congressional appropriations. GPO's Library Programs Service unit could emerge changed but revitalized, ready to fulfill the roles expected of it in the future.

During the spring 1992 meeting of the Depository Library Council, Superintendent of Documents Wayne Kelley noted, in the words of the official summary, that "the only truly equitable program is one where the actual value is transferred to be disposed of by the consumer."[10] Empowerment of the customer, the user, the voter, the taxpayer, the employee, the shareholder, or the consumer is a key feature of the sweeping political, economic, and administrative changes that are taking place today in our own society and throughout the world. Systems characterized by centralized, command-driven, and production-line forms of organization are giving way to constituent-controlled, demand-responsive, service-oriented structures. It is time to use these new structures to deliver maximum benefit for the American public's investment in depository distribution.

Depository libraries have for years been entrusted with the enduring legacy of the depository system: the extensive collections of government publications that are maintained for public use in hundreds of locations throughout the nation. They have also developed, largely on their own, the facilities and the trained staff to provide convenient access to these publications, including the electronic publications that form a growing part of depository information resources. Few would dispute that on the whole depository libraries have merited the trust that has been placed in them, and that they have done an excellent job with the available resources. It is time now to entrust to depositories all of the tools that they need to deliver government information to the people whom they serve. By empowering them to make their own decisions, the depository program will remain true to its original mission, and will be prepared to respond creatively to the challenges of a new century.

C. Creation of a National Collection of Last Resort

The creation of a National Collection to house at least one copy of each government document printed or produced electronically would provide access, as a depository library of last resort, to copies of documents by reproduction, interlibrary loan, or electronic transmission for other depository libraries throughout the country. The primary function of this collection would be the acquisition, housing and dissemination of documents needed by information users around the country. In general, identification and reference to specific sources would be within the purview of the requesting depository; however, in cases where

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[10]Administrative Notes, Vol. 13, No. 11, May 31, 1992.

such identification is difficult or impossible except with onsite access, the librarians at the National Collection could provide some reference help and technical service type information based on their holdings. This collection would be very labor intensive, very expensive and have an expansive level of service since it would be serving the whole nation.

The establishment of a National Collection would provide access to otherwise unavailable "fugitive" documents by requiring agencies to submit only two or three copies of items that could not be procured in large numbers. With dissemination on demand, the National Collection could house and make available to depositories those titles with limited interest and infrequent user potential that are now being distributed to and permanently retained by fifty-two regional libraries. This would be cost-effective for both the Government Printing Office and for the regional depositories. GPO monies saved on printing, binding and distribution could be reallocated to support the National Collection. Funding in local depositories that had previously gone to process and store these items could be reallocated for other purposes.

The National Collection could be built upon an existing regional collection of exhaustive historical breadth with additional resources culled from the collections of other regionals nationwide to create a comprehensive warehouse of materials readily available to any user in the United States.

With the National Collection established, some regionals, as they are now designated, could be allowed to select less than 100% and to discard items after some defined period and after offering their material to the National Collection. Another option for current regionals would be to become a Super-Regional (see below).

This structure would meet some citizen information needs that are currently unmet by improving access to materials of limited distribution. It would also allow Federal Agencies to disseminate all information to at least one location, getting information into the system that is not currently represented.

Questions to be answered include:

- How to fund the program?

- Can the National Collection benefits justify the cost involved in implementation and operation?

- Does it reach all user groups? Urban/rural, academic/business, different geographical regions, etc.

- Is access for the user quick enough to be useful and is access certain?

- Who would be the parent organization for the National Collection and how would it mesh with other components of the depository system?

D. Creation a Network of Super-Regionals

Like the National Collection described above, Super-Regionals would be libraries of last resort, but organized at a regional level to insure coverage for all geographic areas within that region. A Super-regional would be designated by the Government Printing Office to serve as the "regional collection" for one of ten Federal depository Regions to be defined by GPO based upon geographic distribution and population density in the United States. (The Environmental Protection Agency's 10 regions would be a good model.) These depositories would provide resource sharing and other support activities to approximately five contiguous states optimally having similar industries and services.

Institutions agreeing to accept Super-Regional status must demonstrate ability to act in this capacity based on strength of collection, adequacy of facility, commitment to continued funding, and enough staff and technical support to meet the needs of constituent depositories and of other Super-Regionals. Responsibilities for Super-Regionals might include:

■ dissemination of paper, microfiche, and electronic products

■ continuation of the archival function of current regional depositories

■ Coordination of training activities for librarians within the defined area

■ Assistance with difficult reference questions.

Unlike a regional depository under the current structure, the Super-Regional collection would be based, at least to a degree, on the subject and geographic needs of the states in its designated region with comprehensive coverage of materials of more universal interest. Collection development at this level would necessitate a transition from the "item selection" base to a more flexible option such as SuDoc stem or title selection in the Depository Library Program. This would eliminate the need for 52 regionals, including the Super-Regionals, to acquire and maintain ALL documents distributed by GPO while developing strong, comprehensive subject- and geographical-based "regional" collections in each of the 10 Federal Depository Regions. Also, as with the National Collection, "fugitive" documents could more easily be brought into the program if procurement of some documents were limited to 10 Super-Regionals as opposed to 52 regional depositories. Selective depository libraries in each state would also be encouraged to develop strong subject-based collections in cooperation with neighboring depositories to complement rather than duplicate collections. In this scenario, local participants could build the strongest network possible by using their combined, unique knowledge of their region, libraries, and patron needs.

With the rapid advancement of electronic technologies and products, more and more information will be made available electronically and the capability of electronic file transfer will greatly reduce the need for warehousing as much information as is presently required. With GPO's proposed development and implementation of FIND, the Federal Information Directory, a comprehensive Federal information product and service locator system, in conjunction with advanced delivery systems and electronic transmission capabilities unavailable at the conception of the Depository Library Program as we now know it, a reduction in hard copy distribution to depository libraries could be achieved without

appreciably limiting or restricting access to information. The substantial savings to GPO in the Printing and Binding budget and reduction in distribution costs would enable GPO to reallocate funds to the development and support of Electronic Depositories or Federal Electronic Distribution Sites (FEDS). Electronic dissemination along with the change from Regionals to Super-Regionals could allow for a reallocation of funds so that financing limitations at all levels of the system would be less harmful to the overall goal of information dissemination and retrieval.

Questions to be answered include:

- Would current regionals or other large libraries be willing to take on the responsibility of serving a larger area?

- What are the incentives for becoming a Super-Regional?

- How would the Super-Regional concept mesh with other components of the Depository program? Would the current regionals disappear?

- Would the 10-region concept of 5-state groupings work within the current depository structure in which geographical distribution of depository libraries is very uneven?

- How would this system compare in cost with the current system? At what level and by whom will costs be absorbed?

- Does it reach all user groups?

- Is access for the user quick enough to be useful and is access certain?

- If libraries were not willing to become Super-Regionals, would a more attractive alternative be to use this same multi-state region but have Regional or Super-Regional responsibilities shared by several libraries within the area?

E. Creation of a System of Electronic Depositories or Federal Electronic Distribution Sites (FEDS)

The Electronic Depository concept is based on the premise that the effective use of electronic products requires special expertise and hardware and software technologies not currently available in many depository libraries. As more sophisticated products are brought into the depository system, a way must be found to use these sources in an effective, efficient manner.

Electronic depositories would evolve from those depositories currently providing the optimum level of service to the general public and from other depositories wishing to develop advanced services by specializing in electronic products and services. As designated "electronic libraries", these depositories would agree to select depository electronic products and services as they become available, regardless of electronic format. Such electronic depositories might or might not also collect selected depository items in paper.

Electronic depository libraries would take responsibility not only for receiving electronic products but also for providing support to others for access to electronic information. This type of agreement would necessarily charge these sites with a commitment to learn the developing technologies and to provide service to their constituents. Such services might include training in the use of the systems, the development of user-friendly front-ends for certain products, or other activities intended to facilitate the use of electronic government information.

In return for this enhanced responsibility, these depositories should receive supplemental support. For example, a technological advisor might be provided for at least one electronic site in each of the 10 Federal Depository Regions. This position could be funded jointly by the Government Printing Office and appropriations from each state in the Region. Each technological advisor would be expected to travel to other designated electronic sites within the Region to assist in training and development for those sites. Staff at those sites would in turn serve as resource persons for other depository libraries in the area not designated as electronic libraries.

With the further development of NREN/Internet and with the establishment of the Government Printing Office as the "gateway" to agency electronic information, it would be necessary for some FEDS to become nodes to provide access to the information infrastructure for those depository libraries not yet connected. The electronic site structure may develop slowly at first with only a handful of libraries willing to make such a drastic commitment, but as expertise is shared and more libraries become willing to embrace the technology, the emphasis will shift much more dramatically from the printed product to the electronic world. There is a real opportunity for economic efficiency if we can learn to use electronic products effectively and for improving access to certain information.

Questions to be answered include:

- Would current regionals or other large libraries be willing to take on the responsibility of having this technological expertise and serving a larger area?

- What are the incentives for becoming an Electronic Depository?

- How would the Electronic Depository concept mesh with other components of the Depository program?

- How would this system compare in cost with the current system? At what level and by whom will costs be absorbed?

- Does it reach all user groups?

- Is access for the user quick enough to be useful and is access certain?

F. **Require libraries to meet minimum technical guidelines to be full participants in the system. Libraries unable to meet the guidelines could continue to receive core collection publications but not receive electronic data or other publications beyond the core.**

This scenario is a variation on the electronic depositories scenario. Rather than having some libraries specifically designated as electronic depositories, with all the associated responsibilities, this proposal requires all depository libraries to meet the minimum technical guidelines in order to be a "full-fledged" depository library. The minimum technical guidelines should become requirements, not just guidelines, and be included in the "Instructions to Depository Libraries." If a library truly wants to be a full-fledged depository library, then it will have to have the required minimum workstation configuration and software, and be able to provide the associated reference service necessary to access this information.

Those libraries that are unable to meet the minimum technical guidelines could continue to be in the Depository Library Program, but they would receive only a core collection of government information, in either paper or microfiche. None of the materials that these libraries receive would be in electronic format, and therefore they would not need the hardware, software, and technical expertise.

Some libraries may never have the necessary funds to purchase the equipment needed to meet the minimum technical guidelines. What service will these libraries be able to provide to their users if they have a CD-ROM, but no workstation in which to play it? On the other hand, such a library could serve to provide its users with basic core government information and to refer its users to another depository who can provide information beyond the core.

G. Build on Existing Strengths to Create a System of Subject-Based Regionals

Many current depository libraries--both regional and selective--have developed significant expertise in one or more subject areas. The subject-based regional concept draws upon this developed expertise to provide relief to those regionals having difficulties due to lack of space, staff, and/or funding. Selective depositories with expertise in specific subject areas or those willing to develop expertise in specific subject areas could accept the obligations of comprehensive collection and service in their specialization.

The subject-based regional concept would enhance an invigorated effort to bring about closer cooperation between the information creators (agencies), the information disseminators (GPO) and information access points (libraries) to insure that information products are used to their full potential. By having a smaller pool of contacts for specific subjects, these relationships would have an improved chance of developing into a very effective tool for improved communication.

Many of the factors important in the Super-Regional concept would be valid here:

■ Ability of the library to take on an added role;

■ Willingness to accept the responsibilities for training, dissemination, archival functions, and reference assistance within a subject field;

■ Prospects for bringing more "fugitive" documents into the system since fewer copies might be needed for special subject collections.

Questions to be answered include:

■ Would current regionals or other large libraries be willing to take on the responsibility of serving a larger area?

■ What are the incentives for becoming a Subject-based Regional?

■ How would the Subject-based Regional concept mesh with other components of the Depository program? Would the current regionals disappear? What geographic area would Subject-based Regionals be expected to serve?

■ How would this system compare in cost with the current system? At what level and by whom will costs be absorbed?

■ Does it reach all user groups?

■ Is access for the user quick enough to be useful and is access certain?

It should be noted that there may be some significant overlap and blending of possibilities within four of the scenarios, the national library, the super-regional, the subject-based regional, and the electronic depository. For example:

■ Could a Subject-based Depository for Environmental Protection also be the Electronic Depository as well as serve as the National Collection for this topic?

■ Could a Super-Regional serve as the National Collection for a particular topic based on geographical area?

■ With new technologies providing instant access - would an exceptional National Collection library do away with the need for Super Regionals? Would it be a better use of resources to concentrate everything at that level except for selective depositories?

H. **Restructure the Depository program to recognize a new role for the depositories when electronic government information comes through a network or a single point of access, such as the GPO Gateway/Windo. Recognize that the DLP creates a foundation for building electronic dissemination systems, and that it can be a primary element in an active Federal information dissemination program**

Should there even be a Federal Depository Library Program in an age dominated by electronic publishing on the Federal level? Is there a role for a system of library centers,

geographically dispersed, acting primarily as information repositories in an environment where information can be distributed from point of origin directly to point of use without need for transmission through or storage in a library?

In response to these, and other similar questions, technologists, and many in government, often argue that the need for library service, such as the DLP, will diminish as individuals obtain the ability to access information via electronic channels. They see a system of Depository Libraries as an anachronism in an information environment based on high speed computer networks and such services as a GPO Gateway, a program like the NTIS FedWorld, or a Government-wide Inventory Information/Locator System (GIILS) like the one proposed by Charles McClure and his associates. Certainly, under such scenarios, the traditional role of depository libraries as repositories of Federal information offers less to the information user. Those people who can gain access to the government information they need directly from their homes, schools, and offices, or through "information kiosks" located in various public centers, are less likely to use depository libraries.

Other commonly acknowledged barriers to the DLP playing a significant role in a system featuring direct access to the databases of Federal agencies are:

■ Many DLP libraries do not and will not have the technological resources to effectively handle electronic information;

■ Many DLP libraries cannot, or are unwilling to, support the costs of handling electronic information or commit their resources to it;

■ Federal agencies are not willing to consign the dissemination of their electronic information to the GPO;

■ There is no legal authority for an electronic DLP;

■ GPO is unwilling, or unable, to carry out the DLP effectively;

■ GPO is primarily the printer, binder, and sales jobber for Congress and the executive agencies and the DLP is only a secondary part of its mission;

■ Goals of the institutions controlling DLP libraries do not necessarily support the principles of the program;

■ Ownership and care-taking aspects of information handling are unclear where electronic information is concerned; and

■ The DLP libraries have a number of weaknesses including poorly trained staff, substantial variations in quality of service, ineffective use of technology, poor geographic distribution, and a diverse assortment of libraries rather than an interlocking network.

Nevertheless, imagination and dreams of a network Utopia often cause us to overlook the fact that depository libraries are more than geographically dispersed repositories. The idea of

replacing the DLP with a high-performance communication network serving citizens through gateways and GIILS-like systems is supported mainly by several underlying assumptions. The first is that public and private resources will be available for, and will be committed to building a government information network from the top down. The second assumption is that a single point/direct access system will connect widely distributed and diverse Federal systems in such a way as to be easily accessible and easily manipulated by the user. The third is that this system will be the most cost effective for the Federal agencies and affordable to all potential users.

In order to duplicate and enhance what a system of electronically connected libraries could attain, a dissemination system must:

■ Provide actual comprehensive/single point access to a vast array of Federal information resources in a variety of formats which represent historical as well as current data;

■ Provide equity of access to the public regardless of technological ability or ability to pay for the information and some form of free access to all Federal information resources;

■ Prove more cost effective to the government than supporting programs such as the DLP as a part of the system's foundation infrastructure;

■ Meet a wide variety of information dissemination needs for Federal agencies;

■ Meet the diverse, specific, and esoteric information needs of the general public, educators, students, researchers, and business people;

■ Provide a means as an alternative to libraries to insure local connectivity to the dominant communication network;

■ Provide an infrastructure of human resources that will support the need for professional consultation and guidance, research assistance, and public training.

The proposition that the DLP provides an "information safety-net" for those individuals who cannot afford either the technology or to pay for access to electronic information is not an argument upon which the DLP should base its continued existence as part of the Federal electronic information dissemination system. It relegates the DLP to a minor role in access to government information resources. Although it is true that the DLP can provide a system of last resort for people without institutional affiliations, or, who cannot pay for the information, it implies that the information provided through the DLP will be in the least desirable and cheapest form, and that it will be only information without charge or with a lower user fee. In addition, it does not support the mission of the DLP as envisioned under the legislation that established the program as being one of the major providers of primary government information resources.

What are the primary features that give the DLP an important role to play as first, a foundation for building electronic dissemination systems, and, second, as a primary element

in a Federal information dissemination program? Supporters of the DLP argue that:

■ The program provides readily established connectivity to local, state, and regional networks carrying government information resources;

■ The DLP offers an established infrastructure of service points requiring less investment of public funds to enhance and a channel for institutional funding;

■ The DLP librarians are quickly developing their knowledge and use of network services and electronic systems;

■ DLP libraries are committing more resources to access to information as well as to acquiring and storing it;

■ DLP libraries provide an array of resources in hardcopy formats and in human ability that cannot be matched by individuals using gateway or GIILS type services from home or office;

■ The DLP has the best potential for developing a comprehensive information and research service for the general public, educators, students, researchers, business people, and people with specialized information needs; and

■ The DLP provides service and training to users regardless of social status, knowledge of the technology, or the ability to pay for electronic information, in a politically neutral, community environment.

I. Rename the program to recognize changes brought on by the era of electronic information

The name "Depository Library Program" is too restrictive and not appropriate in an era of electronic information. Webster's definition of depository reads "a place where something is deposited especially for safekeeping." The citizen soon will have access to information in many formats including active and interactive formats which will never be stored or deposited in the local collection.

The name "depository libraries" also is not recognizable to most citizens. Unless a citizen has prior knowledge that depository libraries contain collections of Federal information, these libraries are probably the best kept secret around. Even if a major marketing effort were undertaken to improve and increase library use, the name itself would handicap these efforts.

As a suggestion, the name "Federal Information Program" reflects clearly the purpose and content of the program. Individual libraries could then be designated as "Federal Information Centers" for their communities.

J. Downsize the program to meet budgetary constraints

The Depository Library Program has been under almost continuous budgetary pressure in recent years, as the costs of running the program have far exceeded the available resources.[11] The primary response of the Government Printing Office to these pressures has been to make much of the information available in less costly alternative formats, primarily microform. For example, despite the fundamental importance of the bound Congressional Record, it is now distributed in paper only to the regional depositories. Other depositories receive it on microform or have to pay to obtain it in paper. Many other publications are also only available in microform, while some are available in both paper and microform in the expectation that some libraries will select the less costly alternative.

The rationale for this approach has been that the Government Printing Office can meet its legal obligation to distribute the publications by doing it in a less costly way. On the other hand, for the basic core material heavily used by depository patrons, it is a disservice to the user and to the program itself to distribute the material in ways that make it less accessible and less useful. As more material is distributed in less accessible formats the program is less relevant to meeting the needs of an information user.

Rather than letting the whole program deteriorate, serious thought should be given to maintaining the quality of the program on a smaller scale. Converting selected materials to microform is only a piecemeal solution. The problems of the program are pervasive, and radical approaches may be required for the program to survive. Such radical approaches are necessary because fundamentally, it is not possible to continue to disseminate the same amount of material to the same or a larger number of libraries with the same or fewer resources without making significant changes--including either downsizing or massive conversion to electronic dissemination.

This fact was demonstrated clearly in the fall of 1992, when the program confronted a crisis in which it became clear that further conversion to microfilm threatens the program itself. Then, in response to a 10 percent budgetary shortfall, the Government Printing Office asked libraries to reduce their selections and specifically targeted a number of "big ticket items" for conversion to microform, including the Serial Set, the Code of Federal Regulations, the U.S. Code, and other basic materials. To many, these are the most fundamental documents about the operation of the government that justify the very existence of the program. In striking a blow here, GPO struck at the heart of the program itself.

It should be clear that if Congress is not going to provide the program with more funds, other fundamental changes will have to take place. GPO can either stop printing and distributing material when they run out of money or they can make proposals to Congress for ways to downsize the program and its costs.

There are several possibilities for downsizing the depository program which would result in the distribution of fewer materials and reducing the cost to GPO. This, in turn, should

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[11] See discussion at nt. 6, supra.

permit GPO to maintain the quality of the program without further conversions to microform. No proposal for downsizing will be popular. Some library or group of libraries will feel the pain. Painful though it is, some effort to downsize seems necessary if the program is to survive at all. Several possibilities for downsizing are listed below in order of increasing difficulty.

1. Downsize by reducing the amount of material selected by each library.

Either voluntarily, or through the establishment of a ceiling on selections, each library -- perhaps even including the regionals -- could be asked to reduce the amount of material it acquires. In the past, libraries were encouraged to acquire a large number of items; there was even an expectation that every library would select a minimum of 25% of the available items, whether they needed that material or not. In a time of financial difficulty, such assumptions are no longer valid.

Instead of encouraging each library to select more than they really need, each library should select only those items likely to be needed to serve its constituency. Under this plan, regionals might be permitted to select everything, but need not do so. Selectives would be asked to review the items they select with their primary depository constituencies in mind. Instead of minimum selection targets, ceiling targets -- rules of thumb -- might be established to help libraries decide what might be appropriate. For example, large research libraries might select 50 to 90 percent, mid-sized libraries might select 20 to 50 percent, and law libraries might select 7 to 15 percent.

To help libraries hone their selections, GPO should also refine its item numbers to allow libraries to be more precise in their selections. It is widely acknowledged that the current item numbers are quite broad, and that many libraries receive more than they really want because they must take a large category of materials to receive the few items really needed.

2. Downsize by eliminating selective housing arrangements.

A corollary of the need to downsize and the need to ask libraries to select no more than they really need is a need to eliminate entirely selective housing arrangements. Under this program, depositories select materials they don't really need and send them to another library for "housing". These arrangements effectively increase the number of depository libraries and the amount of material distributed under the program. For example, in the years before law libraries became depositories, it was not uncommon for another depository on a university campus to select legal materials not really needed in their collection and send them to the law library. Although this arrangement met a significant need, it has the effect of increasing the costs of the program. In an era of financial stringency, it seems entirely appropriate to insist that only those libraries that have been named as depositories should be able to collect and hold the material they acquire. Elimination of such arrangements would leave the total number of validly designated depository libraries unchanged.

3. Downsize by reducing the number of depository libraries.

If the foregoing measures do not result in sufficient savings, it may be necessary to confront the difficult political question of finding ways to reduce the total number of depository libraries. Reduction in the number of libraries in the program will be the most painful solution, but may have to be done in order to keep the program from sinking of its own weight. With over 1400 depository libraries throughout the nation, there are an average of 28 in each state. Realistically, it may be that that number would have to be reduced to 24 or 25, or even fewer. In all likelihood, if done carefully, that step could be taken without significant damage to the overall program.

How is it possible to reduce the number of libraries in the program? What libraries would be terminated? This is obviously the most difficult of areas, and an answer probably requires a re-examination of some of the program's premises. Two fundamental aspects of the program are the Congressional designation and the requirement of public access.

a. One Congressional designation per district.

Under the depository library law, each Congressional district is entitled to have two depository libraries. However, over the years, when redistricting has occurred, a district might have ended up with more than two depository libraries and a new district created without any. This situation has resulted in the designation of extra Congressional depositories in individual Congressional districts. In the past, such libraries have been grand-parented in, and have not been required to leave the program. At a time when the program does not have sufficient financial resources to stay afloat, however, Congressional delegates may have to decide which of the libraries they will designate, and eliminate the other(s). The program can no longer afford redundancy in Congressional designations.

b. Federal Libraries.

In many cities, a significant number of Federal libraries are designated as depositories. This number cannot be justified for public access reasons, and many Federal libraries are not open to the public. A review should be conducted of all Federal libraries participating in the depository program. If they are not meeting the purposes of the program, their participation should be terminated.

c. Libraries that do not meet their public access obligation.

Public access to the depository collection is a primary obligation assumed by each depository library. All participating libraries should be reminded of this obligation, and where they fail to meet the obligation they should be terminated from the program.

d. Leave it to the state delegations.

If the foregoing does not result in a sufficient reduction in the number of depository libraries to balance the budget, then each state may have to be given a ceiling -- perhaps based on population or area, or some combination of the two[12] -- in the number of libraries that can be supported. Each Congressional state delegation could meet to decide which libraries were most important to the program and which they could continue to support.

4. Downsize by developing high quality electronic information systems that could adequately meet the need for certain information products.

Even while this downsizing is going on, GPO should move aggressively to develop effective alternative delivery systems that, unlike microform, could meet the needs of users for access to information and eliminate the need for costly paper distribution.

Paper is expensive for libraries to store as well as for the Government Printing Office to print and distribute. If reliable and effective means were developed for the delivery of some information electronically, it would be less necessary for libraries to go to the expense of acquiring and housing the documents. They would, no doubt, continue to select in paper the items they considered central to their mission. However, in many cases, electronic dissemination could substantially replace paper distribution.

IV. Process for the Future

This paper has been written by the members of the Depository Library Council to stimulate a discussion about the future of the Depository Library Program. We have tried to state a number of assumptions about the future, and working within those assumptions, tried to develop a number of alternative scenarios for the future of the program. This report contains a great many different ideas, and no one on the Council agrees with everything in the report. However, we do agree that the depository program needs to be re-structured to meet the challenges created by the economy and the development of new technology. We further agree that the ideas presented here deserve to be debated in the hope of coming to a new consensus about a new future for the depository program.

The Council distributed an earlier draft of this paper for discussion at the Federal Depository Conference in April 1993. That draft also served as the basis for extensive discussion of the issues that it treated during the spring meeting of the Depository Library Council on May 17-18, 1993.

After that, Council plans to disseminate it more broadly and solicit comments from many of the stakeholders: the depository community in general, the Government Printing Office, Federal agencies, the Office of Management and Budget, the information industry, and

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[12] Double the number of Representatives and Senators would result in 1290 depositories, a reduction of over 100. If that doesn't go far enough, 1.5 times the same number would result in 973 depositories. 1,000 depositories across the 50 states would go a long way toward meeting the needs of the people.

members of Congress, especially those serving on the Joint Committee on Printing, the Subcommittee on Government Information of the House Committee on Government Operations, and the Subcommittee on Government Information and Regulation of the Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs.

Following that discussion, Council will consider revising the report, adding to it any recommendations that reflect a consensus among the parties. To the extent that implementation requires Congressional action or decisions from the Government Printing Office, it is hoped that those bodies will follow up directly on the recommendations made by the final report.

Please fill out and return the Comment Sheet!

Your comments and concerns are very important to us! Please fill out the comment sheet on the following pages and return it **before August 31, 1993**. Send it to:

> Jack Sulzer
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"Alternatives for Restructuring"
COUNCIL REPORT COMMENT SHEET

(Optional)
Name: _____   E-mail: _____
Institution _____   Phone: _____

I. History and Objectives

Is the amount of history presented in the report:
___ Too much ___ Too little ___ Correct amount
___ Other comments (use back of sheet)

Are the values and objectives adequately represented in the report?
___ Yes ___ No ___ Other comments

II. Assumptions

Is anything missing?
___ Yes (if so, what?) ___ No ___ Other comments

Do you agree with assumptions?
___ Yes _____ Which ones?
___ No _____ Which ones?
___ Other comments

III.   Alternative Scenarios

A number of scenarios for restructuring the DLP are presented in this report. Please indicate which ones you could support, for those you don't support - indicate why not, and any changes or modifications you would make to them.

A.   Multiple Service Levels
Do you support? ___ Yes ___ No ___ Why not?
Any changes or modifications?_____

B.   Direct Support Model
Do you support? ___ Yes ___ No ___ Why not?
Any changes or modifications?_____

C.   Creation of a National Collection of Last Resort
Do you support? ___ Yes ___ No ___ Why not?
Any changes or modifications?_____

D.   Creation of a Network of Super-Regionals
Do you support? ___ Yes ___ No ___ Why not?
Any changes or modifications?_____

Additional comments:

E. Creation of a System of Electronic Depositories or Federal Electronic Distribution Sites (FEDS)
Do you support? ___ Yes ___ No ___ Why not?
Any changes or modifications?_____

F. Require libraries to meet minimum technical guidelines to be full participants in the system.
Do you support? ___ Yes ___ No ___ Why not?
Any changes or modifications?_____

G. Build on existing strengths to create a system of subject-based Regionals.
Do you support? ___ Yes ___ No ___ Why not?
Any changes or modifications?_____

H. Restructure the Depository Program to recognize a new role for depositories when electronic government information comes through a network or single point of access.
Do you support? ___ Yes ___ No ___ Why not?
Any changes or modifications?_____

I. Rename program to recognize changes brought on by the era of electronic information.
Do you support? ___ Yes ___ No ___ Why not?
Any changes or modifications?_____

J. Downsize the program to meet budgetary constraints.

1. Downsize by reducing the amount of material selected by each library.
Do you support? ___ Yes ___ No ___ Why not?
Any changes or modifications?_____

2. Downsize by eliminating selective housing arrangements.
Do you support? ___ Yes ___ No ___ Why not?
Any changes or modifications?_____

3. Downsize by reducing the number of depository libraries.
Do you support? ___ Yes ___ No ___ Why not?
Any changes or modifications?_____

4. Downsize by developing high quality electronic information systems that could adequately meet the need for certain information products.
Do you support? ___ Yes ___ No ___ Why not?
Any changes or modifications?_____

Are there other scenarios that should be included in this report?

Any other comments?

Additional comments:

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